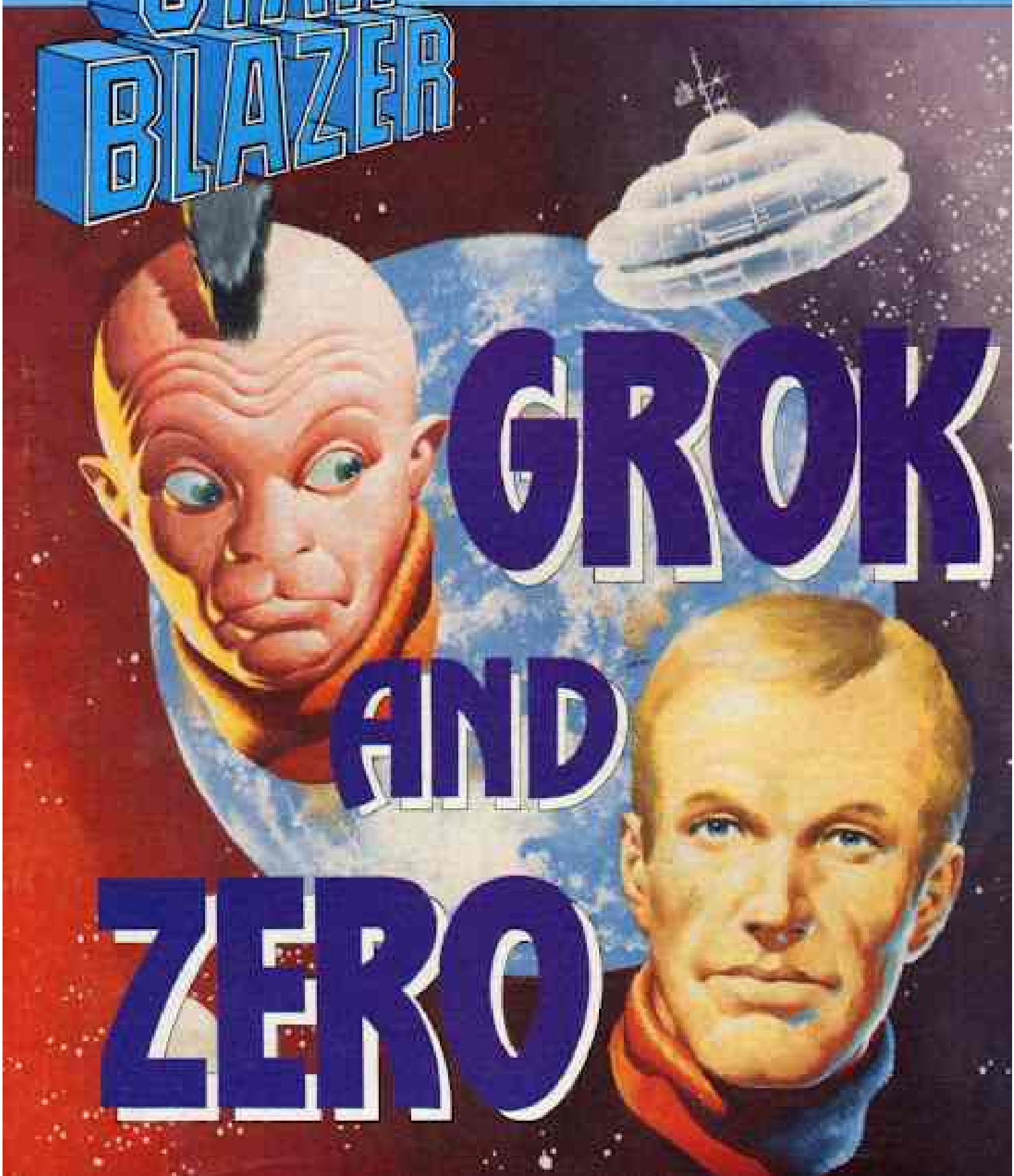
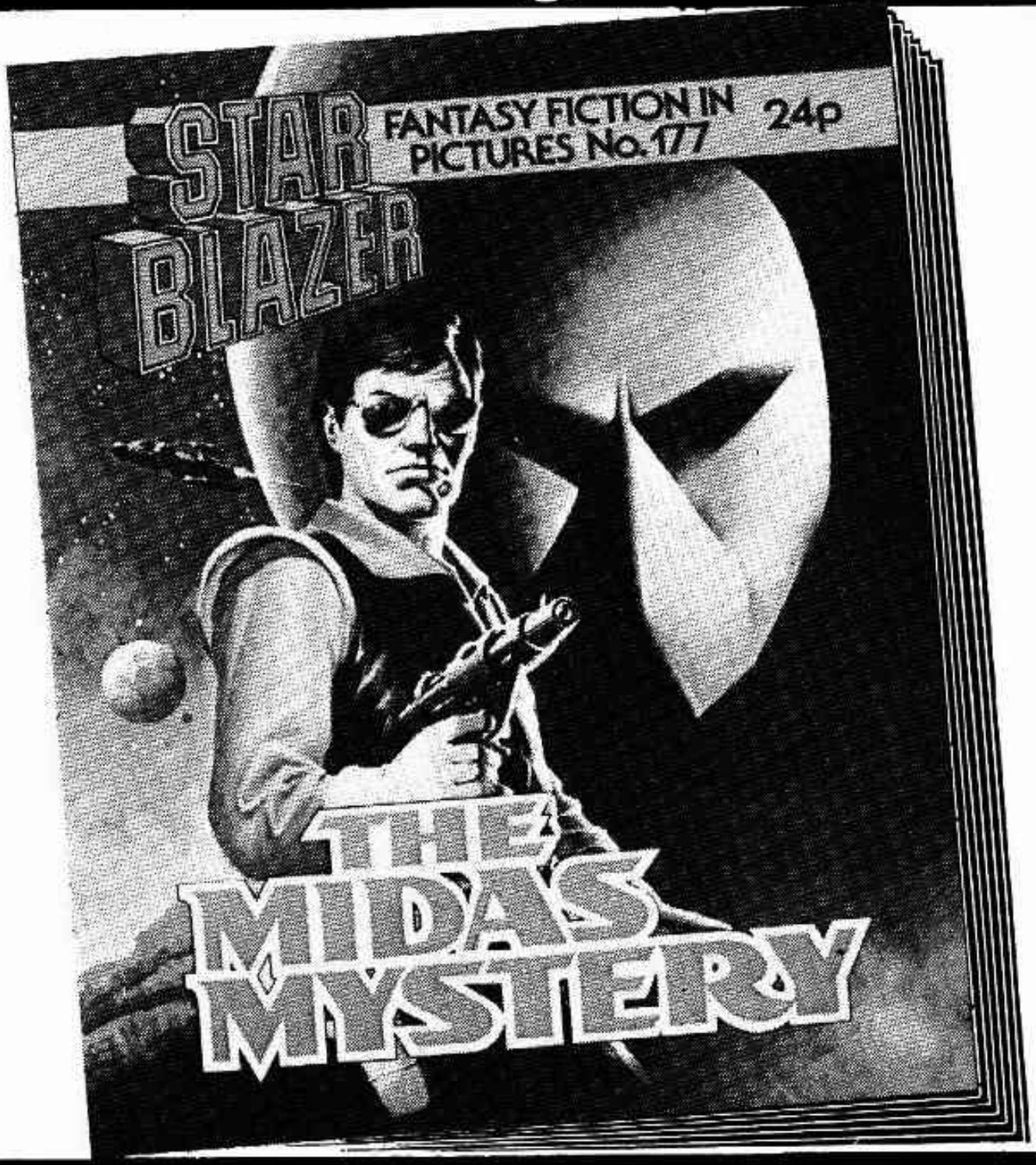
STAR BLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 176 24p



GROK AND ZERO

DON'T FORGET THIS MONTH'S *OTHER*



On sale at your newsagent's NOW!

GROK AND ZERO

SELF-REPAIR OF METEOR STORM DAMAGE NOW COMPLETE, GROK.
THANK YOU, SHIP! DRAW WHAT YOU NEED FROM STORES AND BE READY FOR TAKE-OFF AS SOON AS I'VE SEEN THE STATION SUPER.

INJURED IN THE STORM, GROK'S PARTNER, OFFICER FFIPGEL WAS DISEMBARKED FROM DEEP-FREEZE . . .
SEE YOU BACK ON DUTY WHEN THE MEDICS HAVE FITTED YOU WITH A FEW SPARE PARTS, OLD FRIEND. MAYBE THIS TIME YOU'LL EVEN GET TWO OF YOUR EYES THE SAME COLOUR.

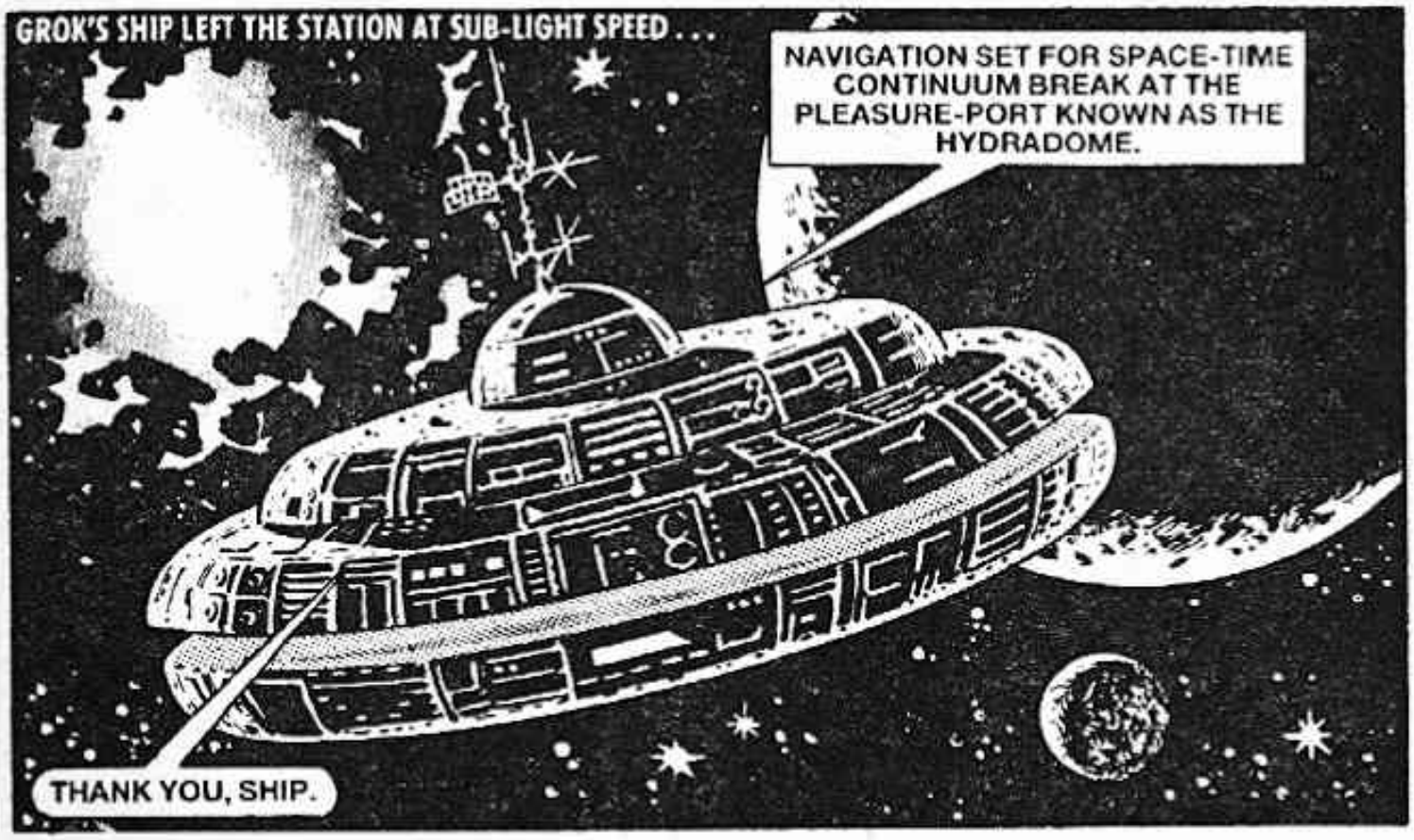
MEANWHILE I'LL BE RUNNING DOWN THAT CONNIVING LIZARD WHO TRICKED US INTO THAT METEOR ZONE. NO CROOK GETS AWAY WITH DAMAGING MY SHIP AND MY PARTNER.

GROK REPORTED TO HIS SUPERINTENDENT.
SO YOU INSIST ON FINISHING YOUR PATROL. JUST WHAT I EXPECTED, YOU DUTIFUL IDIOT. I EVEN HAVE YOUR REPLACEMENT PARTNER STANDING BY.
I'LL MANAGE TILL FFIPGEL GETS BACK, SIR. NO NEED TO BREAK IN A NEW MATE.

HERE HE IS, GROK — FRESH OUT OF THE ACADEMY. THE REGULATION IS TWO OFFICERS TO A PATROL SHIP. YOU TAKE HIM — OR I GROUND YOU.
HOWDY, ER . . . PARTNER.

GROK TOOK ON THE NEW MAN — RELUCTANTLY.
I'M SO LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH AN OLD HAND LIKE YOU. PERHAPS I SHOULD INTRODUCE MYSELF. I AM . . .
FORGET IT, SON. I WOULDN'T EVEN TRY TO SAY ONE OF THOSE TONGUE-TWISTING NAMES THEY GIVE OUT ON CAPELLA-THREE!

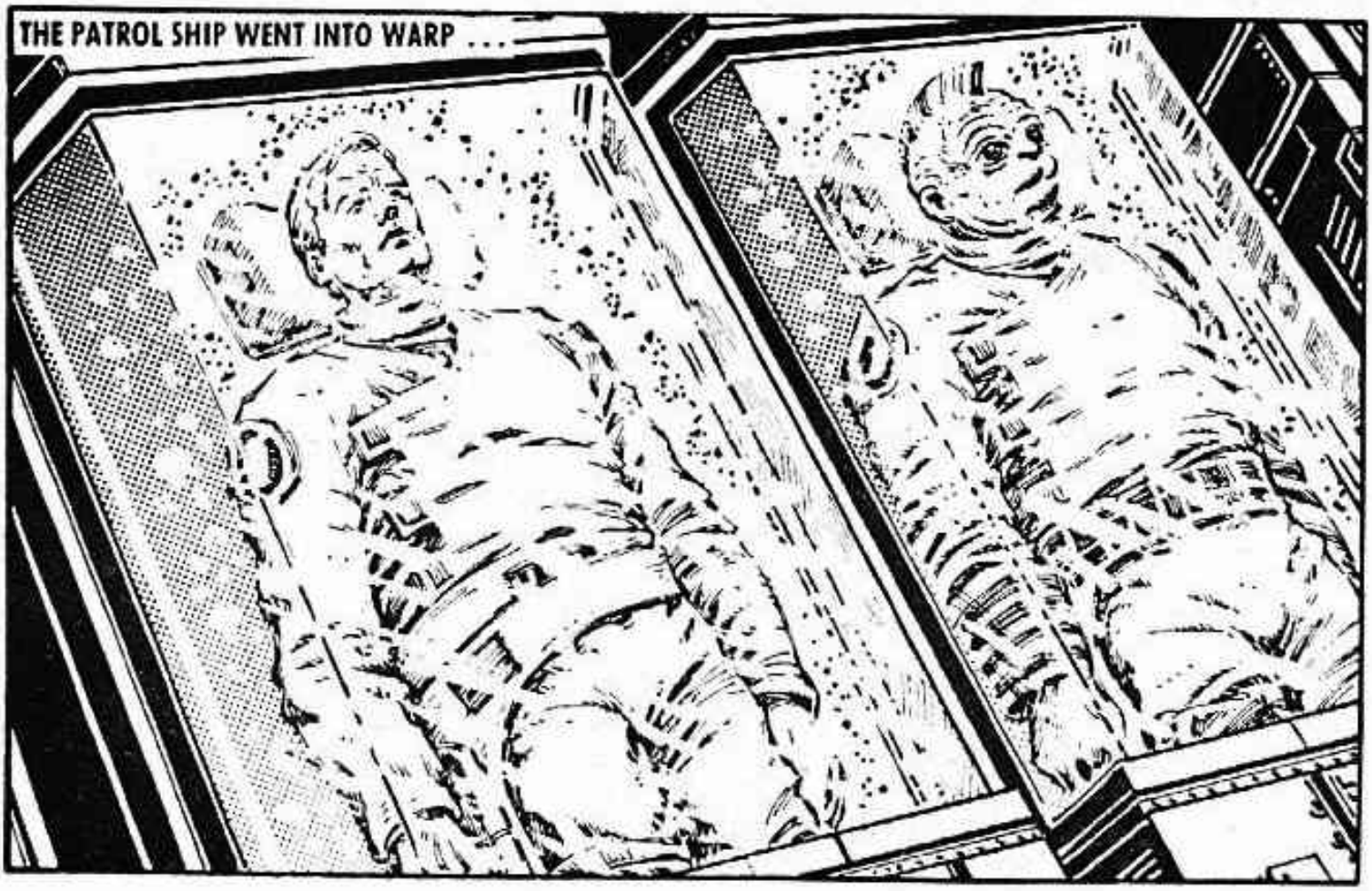
I DETECT YOU ARE WITH YOUR NEW PARTNER, GROK. MY DATABASE HAS HIS RECORD — FORCE NUMERAL ZERO-SIX-NINER —
. . . SMITH!
SHIP, SAY NO MORE. WE'LL CALL HIM ZERO.

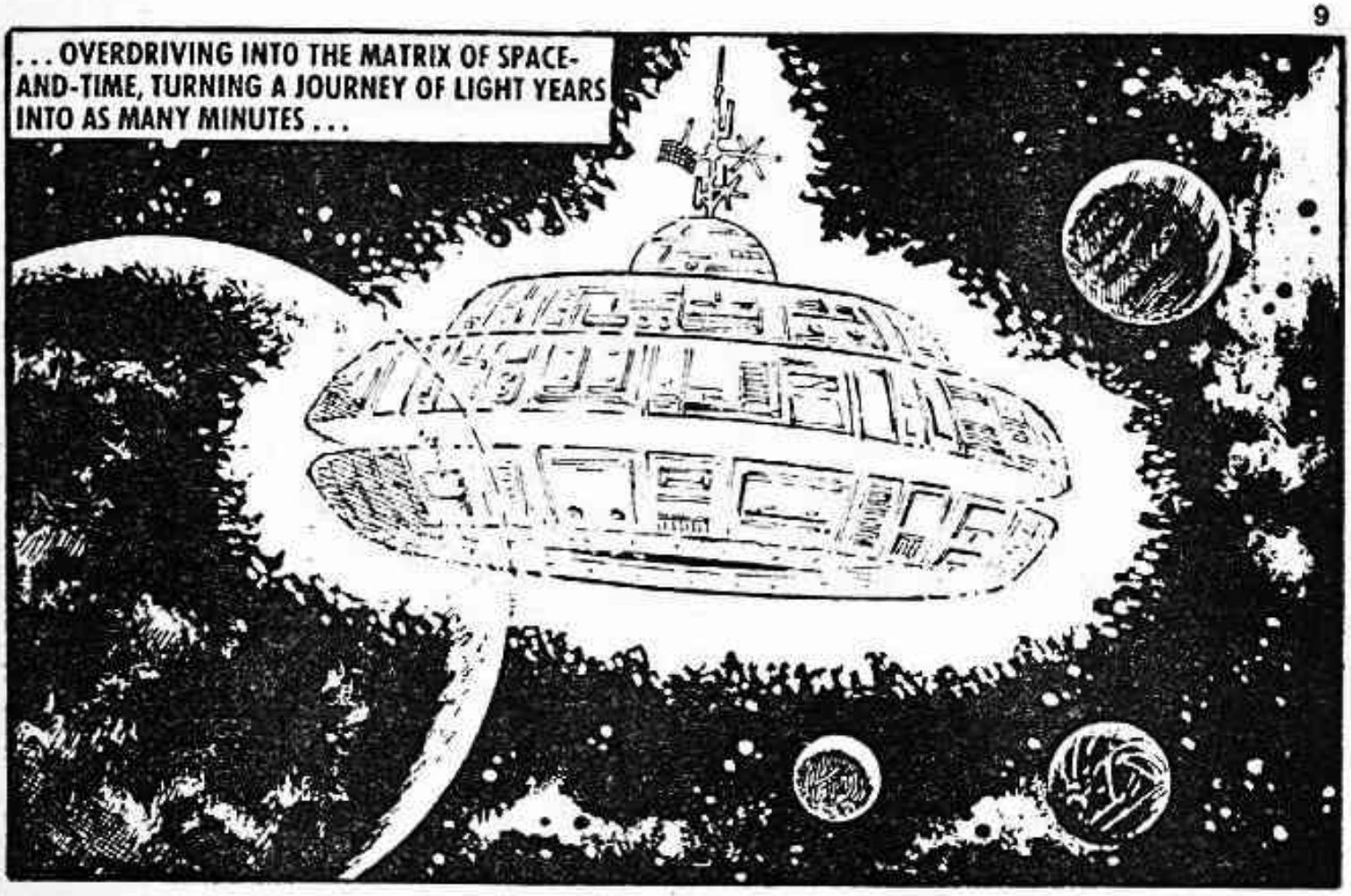

GROK'S SHIP LEFT THE STATION AT SUB-LIGHT SPEED . . .
NAVIGATION SET FOR SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM BREAK AT THE PLEASURE-PORT KNOWN AS THE HYDRADOME.
THANK YOU, SHIP.

ON BOARD, GROK WAS BRIEFING ZERO.
ONE SLURGEL, NATIVE OF THE TEJAT WATERWORLD, A BAIL-JUMPER FROM CHARGES OF MURDER BY TRADING IN IMPURE PRODUCTS.
HE SLAUGHTERED MOST OF A VAMPIRE PLANET BY FLOGGING DOCTORED WATER AS FRESH BLOOD.

THAT IS OUR TARGET THIS TRIP. I MEAN TO GET THAT LIZARD IF I HAVE TO TURN THIS QUADRANT INSIDE OUT.
GROK! PARDON ME, BUT WE ARE READY TO WARP.

I HOPE YOU CAN TAKE WARP TRAVEL, ROOKIE. IT'S ROUGHER THAN ON A CIVILIAN SPACE-LINER.
GROK, THE ACADEMY GIVES THOROUGH CONDITIONING TO ALL CADETS.

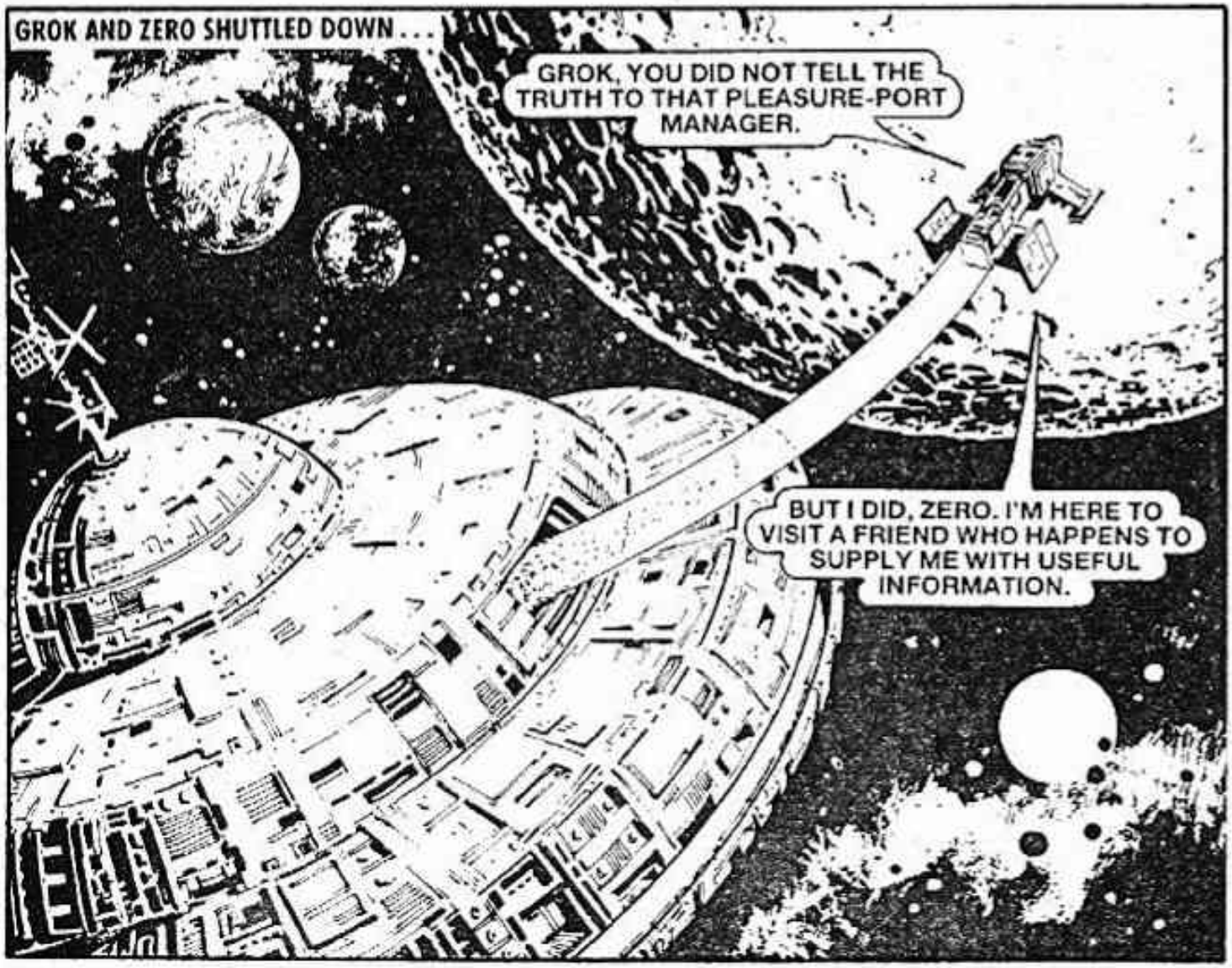

THE PATROL SHIP WENT INTO WARP . . .


. . . OVERDRIVING INTO THE MATRIX OF SPACE-AND-TIME, TURNING A JOURNEY OF LIGHT YEARS INTO AS MANY MINUTES . . .

HYDRA-NINE. WE ARE ASSUMING CLOSE ORBIT.
THANK YOU, SHIP.

ROUGHER THAN THE ACADEMY TANK, EH, ROOKIE. YOU'D BETTER TAKE A REST.
NO — NO . . . URGH — I AM QUITE CAPABLE OF DOING MY DUTY.

THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL VISIT. I AM HERE TO VISIT FRIENDS.
THEN YOU'RE WELCOME, LAWMAN. COME DOWN AND ENJOY YOURSELF.


GROK AND ZERO SHUTTLED DOWN . . .
GROK, YOU DID NOT TELL THE TRUTH TO THAT PLEASURE-PORT MANAGER.
BUT I DID, ZERO. I'M HERE TO VISIT A FRIEND WHO HAPPENS TO SUPPLY ME WITH USEFUL INFORMATION.

ZERO, US POLICE ADOPT WHAT'S CALLED A LOW PROFILE AROUND PLEASURE-PORTS. IT'S BAD FOR BUSINESS IF SPACERS AND CRUISE PASSENGERS THINK WE'RE SNOOPING ON THEM HAVING FUN.

GROK DOCKED THE CRAFT.
HAPPY GREETINGS, GENTLEMEN. YOUR PARKING WILL COST TWENTY CREDITS.
NOT FOR THE LAW IT DON'T, YOU JUNKHEAP. BETTER GET YOURSELF REPROGRAMMED BEFORE I DO IT FOR YOU WITH A CHUNK OF ROCK.

THIS IS THE PLACE. I SHOULDN'T BE VERY LONG.

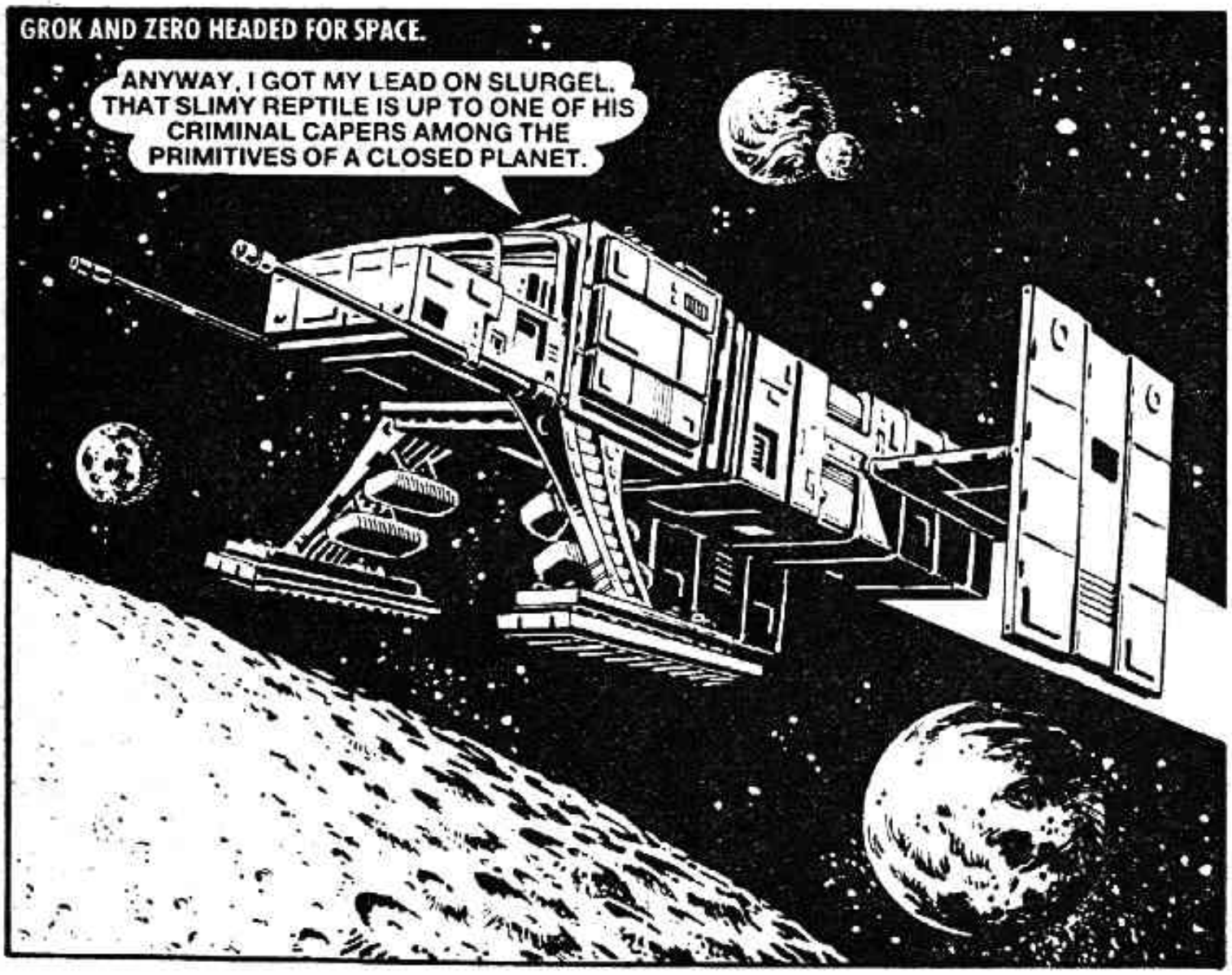
ZERO WAITED . . .
HERE FOR A GOOD TIME, LAWMAN? HOW YOU LIKE I SHOW YOU ROUND NICE NAUGHTY PLACES?
KINDLY GO AWAY.

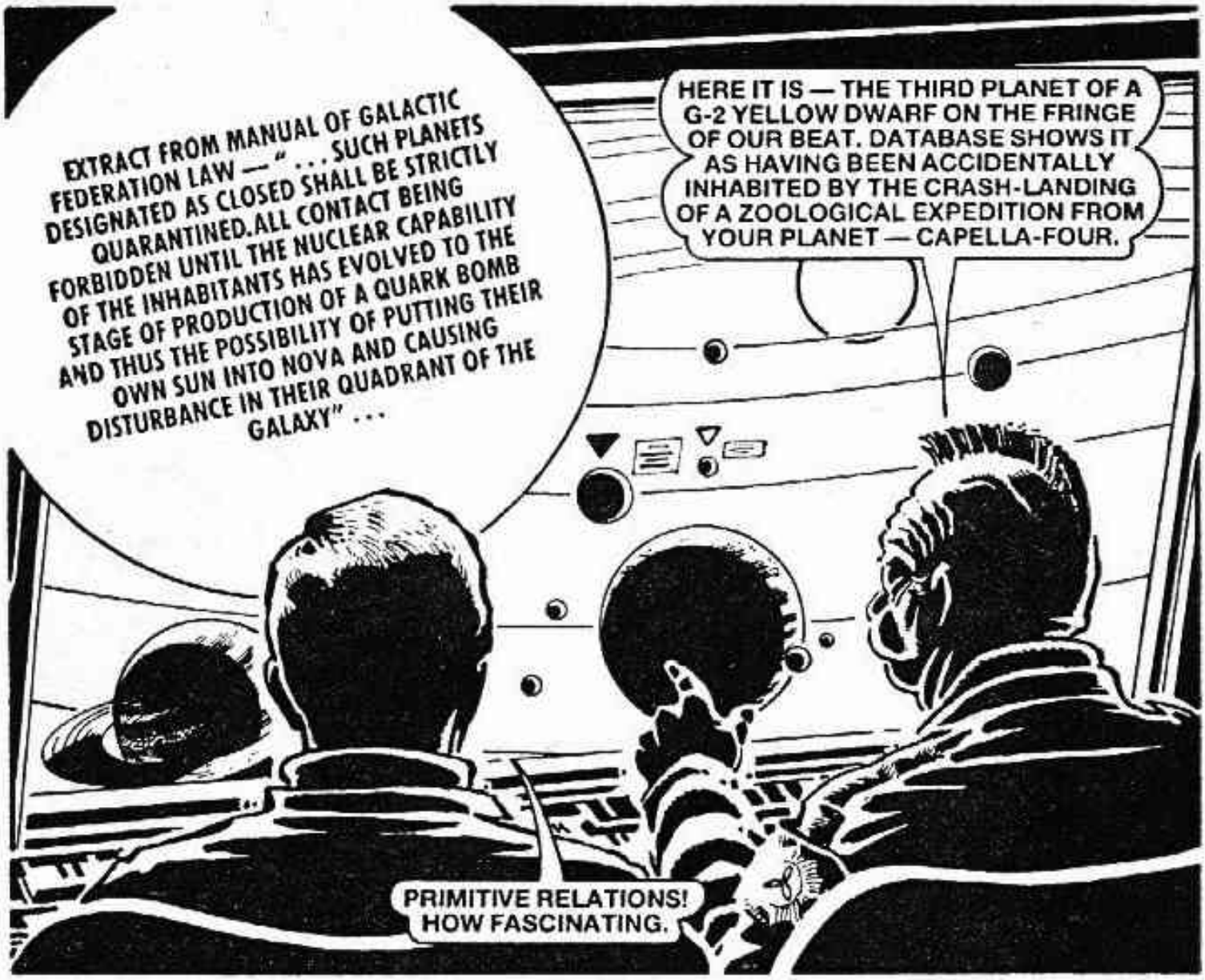
HE LIFTED MY WALLET!
HEY, YOU, — HALT!

HALT!
FRIENDS — HELP! THE LAW IS HARASSING ME!
LET'S SHOW HIM WHAT HAPPENS TO LAWMEN WHAT HARRASSES FOLK IN HYDRADOME.
YES — LET'S.

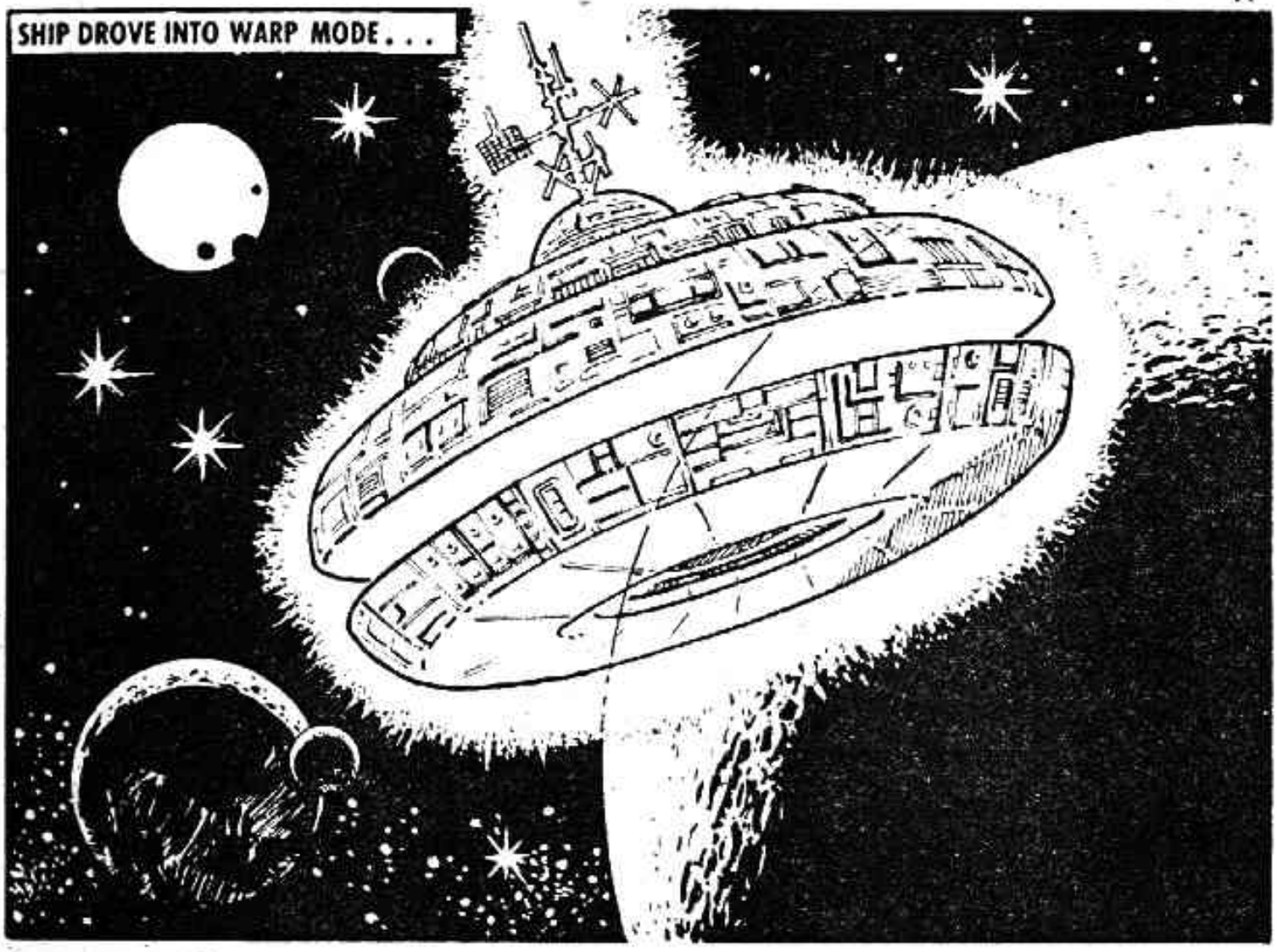
THE ACADEMY LECTURES DIDN'T COVER ANYTHING LIKE THIS.
FREE TREAT AT THE HYDRAMA. QUEUE UP FOR YOUR FREE BRAIN-BUSTERS.
HEY! HEAR THAT? FREE DRINK!
ZERO FOUND HIMSELF ALONE—EXCEPT FOR GROK . . .
PHEW! THAT COULD HAVE BEEN A NASTY SITUATION.
NOT AS NASTY AS IT'S GOING TO BE WHEN THEY FIND THE HYDRAMA ISN'T GIVING OUT FREE TREAT.

GROK AND ZERO DEPARTED TO SOUNDS OF RIOT . . .
WHY ARE SUCH PLACES ALLOWED TO EXIST?
PEOPLE NEED TO LET OFF STEAM. A LITTLE CONTROLLED CHAOS KEEPS DOWN FRICTION IN THE FEDERATION.


GROK AND ZERO HEADED FOR SPACE.
ANYWAY, I GOT MY LEAD ON SLURGEL. THAT SLIMY REPTILE IS UP TO ONE OF HIS CRIMINAL CAPERS AMONG THE PRIMITIVES OF A CLOSED PLANET.

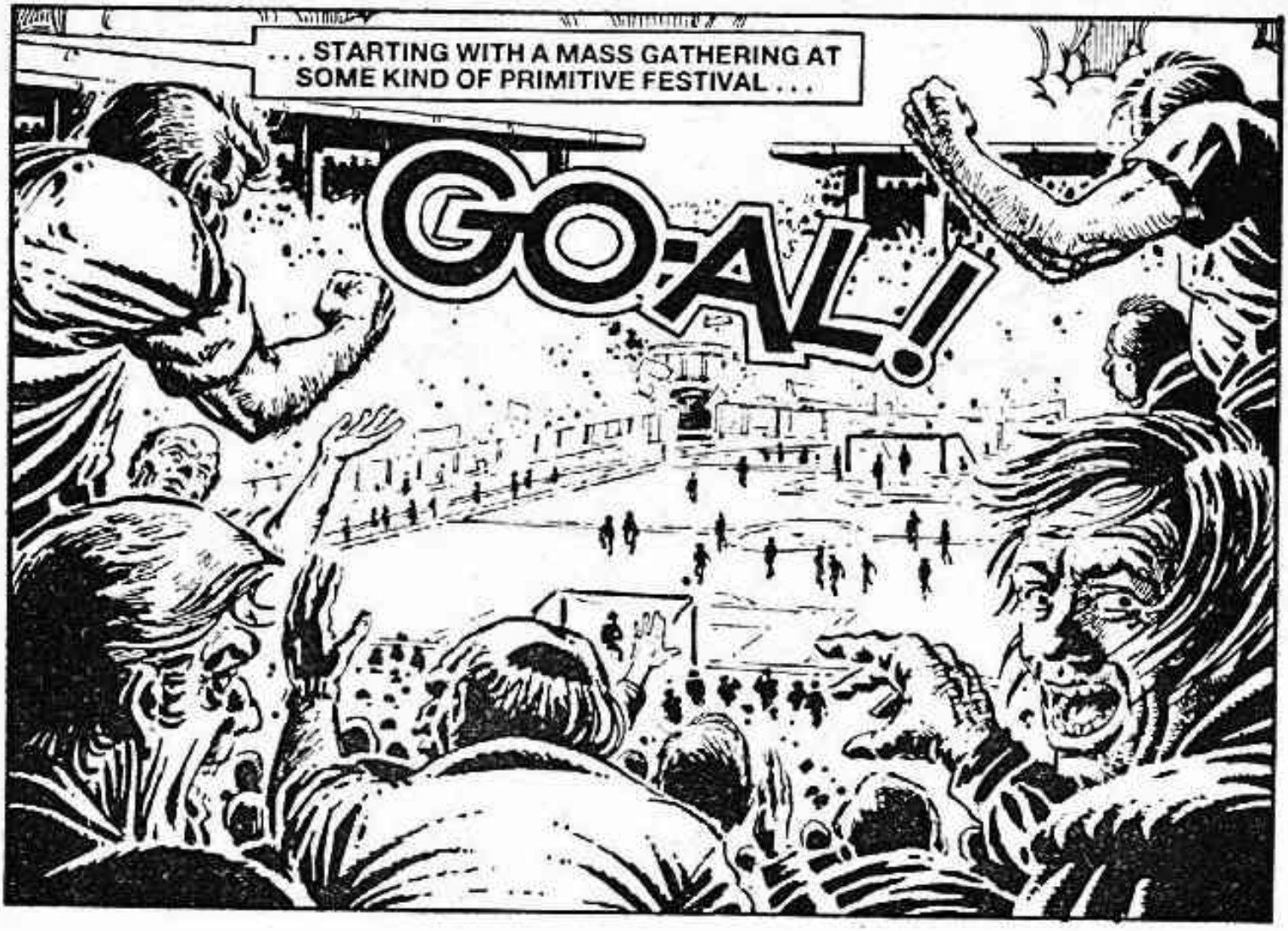

EXTRACT FROM MANUAL OF GALACTIC FEDERATION LAW — " . . . SUCH PLANETS DESIGNATED AS CLOSED SHALL BE STRICTLY QUARANTINED. ALL CONTACT BEING FORBIDDEN UNTIL THE NUCLEAR CAPABILITY OF THE INHABITANTS HAS EVOLVED TO THE STAGE OF PRODUCTION OF A QUARK BOMB AND THUS THE POSSIBILITY OF PUTTING THEIR OWN SUN INTO NOVA AND CAUSING DISTURBANCE IN THEIR QUADRANT OF THE GALAXY" . . .
HERE IT IS — THE THIRD PLANET OF A G-2 YELLOW DWARF ON THE FRINGE OF OUR BEAT. DATABASE SHOWS IT AS HAVING BEEN ACCIDENTALLY INHABITED BY THE CRASH-LANDING OF A ZOOLOGICAL EXPEDITION FROM YOUR PLANET — CAPELLA-FOUR.
PRIMITIVE RELATIONS! HOW FASCINATING.

EXCUSE ME INTERRUPTING. . . BUT WE ARE SUFFICIENTLY CLEAR OF TEJAT NOT TO CAUSE NUISANCE WITH OUR ION WARP WAVE.
THANK YOU, SHIP! WARP WHEN READY.

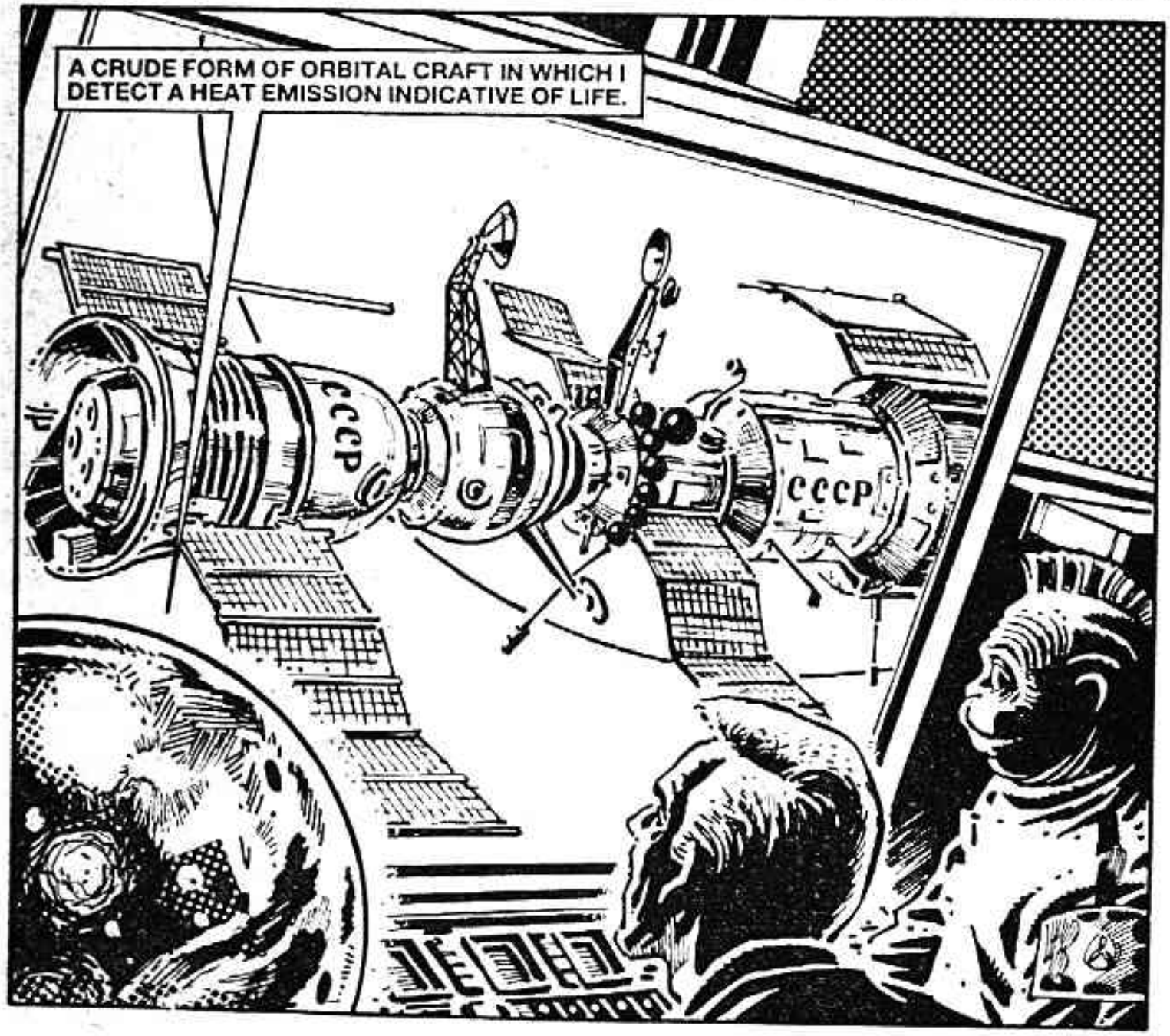

SHIP DROVE INTO WARP MODE . . .

. . . AND OUT . . .
INNARDS CHURNING AGAIN, LAD. RELAX AND ENJOY THE VIDEO WHILE I COVER OUR SUB-LIGHT APPROACH TO THIS SOL-THREE.
URGH!

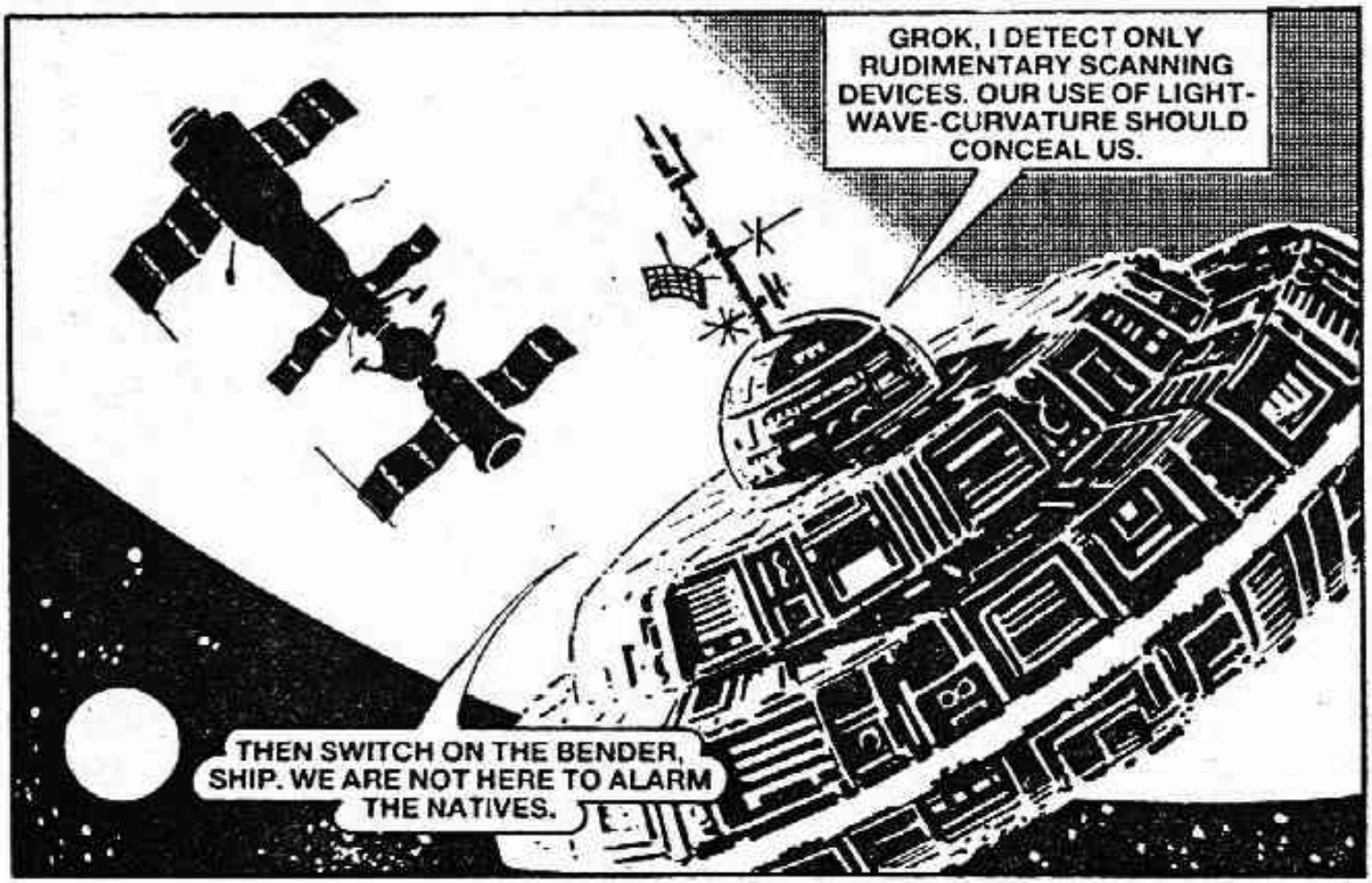
SHIP, SHOW HIM SOME OF THE LIBRARY COMPILED BY THE MONITOR UNIT ON THE PLANET'S SATELLITE.
CERTAINLY, GROK. A RANDOM SELECTION.


. . . STARTING WITH A MASS GATHERING AT SOME KIND OF PRIMITIVE FESTIVAL . . .
GO-AL!

YOUR ATTENTION, GROK. WE ARE BEING OBSERVED.


A CRUDE FORM OF ORBITAL CRAFT IN WHICH I DETECT A HEAT EMISSION INDICATIVE OF LIFE.
CCCP
CCCP

IVAN — HURRY! THIS IS FANTASTIC.
BORIS, IT HAD BETTER BE TO DRAG ME FROM MY STUDY OF COCKROACHES IN ZERO GRAVITY.


GROK, I DETECT ONLY RUDIMENTARY SCANNING DEVICES. OUR USE OF LIGHT-WAVE-CURVATURE SHOULD CONCEAL US.
THEN SWITCH ON THE BENDER, SHIP. WE ARE NOT HERE TO ALARM THE NATIVES.

THE PATROL VESSEL VANISHED . . .
IT WAS THERE, I TELL YOU — A FLYING SAUCER.
TOVARICH, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LITTLE NAP?

GROK, THE MONITOR UNIT DOES NOT RESPOND TO MY SIGNAL. THERE APPEARS TO BE MALFUNCTION.
WE'D BETTER INVESTIGATE! I'M HOPING THE UNIT CAN SUPPLY A LEAD ON SLURGEL.

THE SATELLITE — JUST AN AIRLESS LUMP OF ROCK. THE MONITOR UNIT WAS INSTALLED WHEN A ROUTINE POLICE PATROL DETECTED YOUR RELATIONS SWINGING ABOUT TREES ON THE PLANET.
MY DISTANT RELATIONS, GROK — VERY DISTANT.

GROK, SURELY THAT IS NOT A MONITOR UNIT.
TRUE, ZERO. YOUR DISTANT RELATIONS ARE TRYING TO GET BACK INTO SPACE.
UNITED STATES

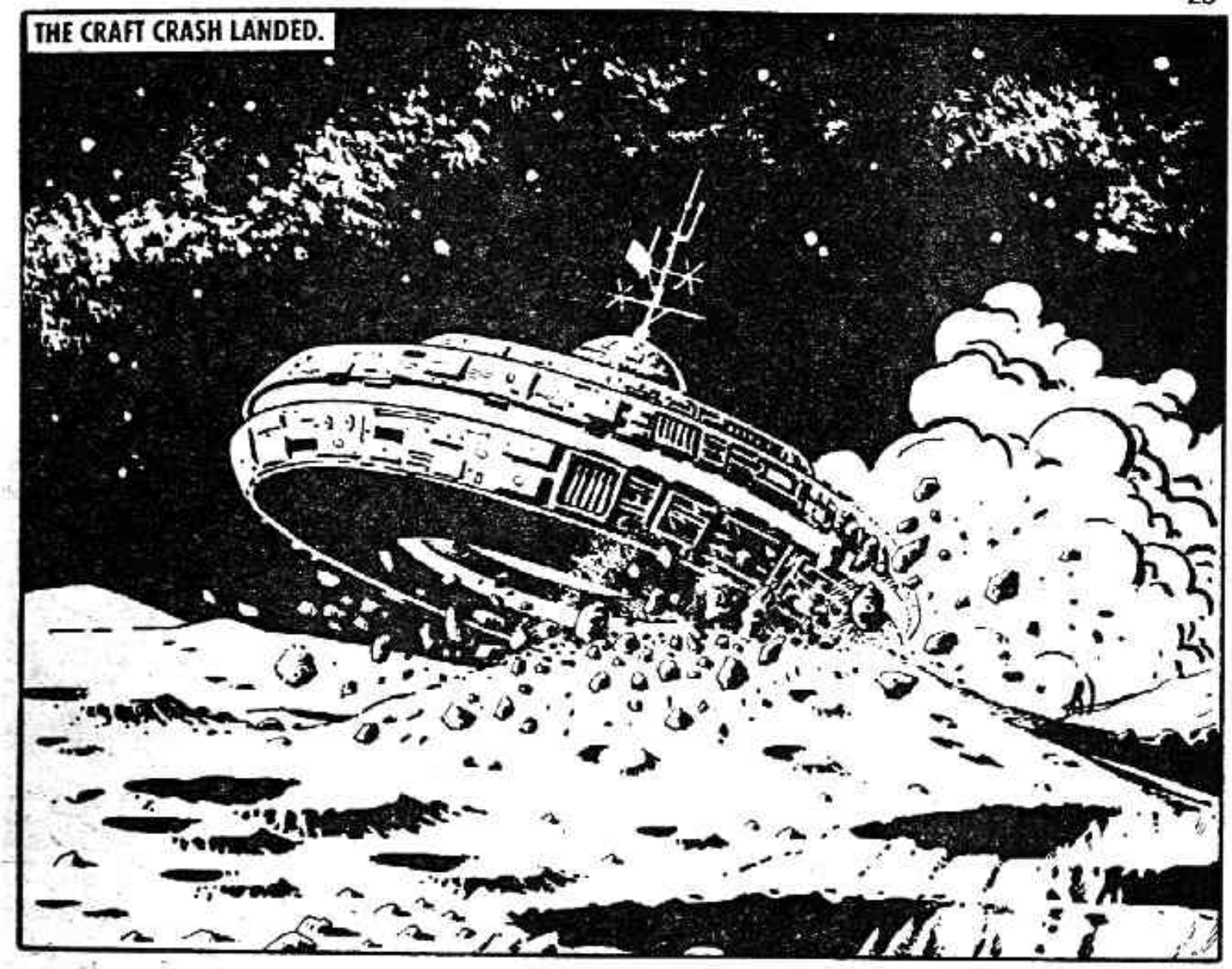
THE UNIT IS IN THAT EXTINCT VOLCANO. THERE ARE LANDING FACILITIES WITHIN THE CONE.

GROK, I AM PICKING UP A TRANSMISSION BEAM FROM THE UNIT.
PUT IT THROUGH, SKIP.

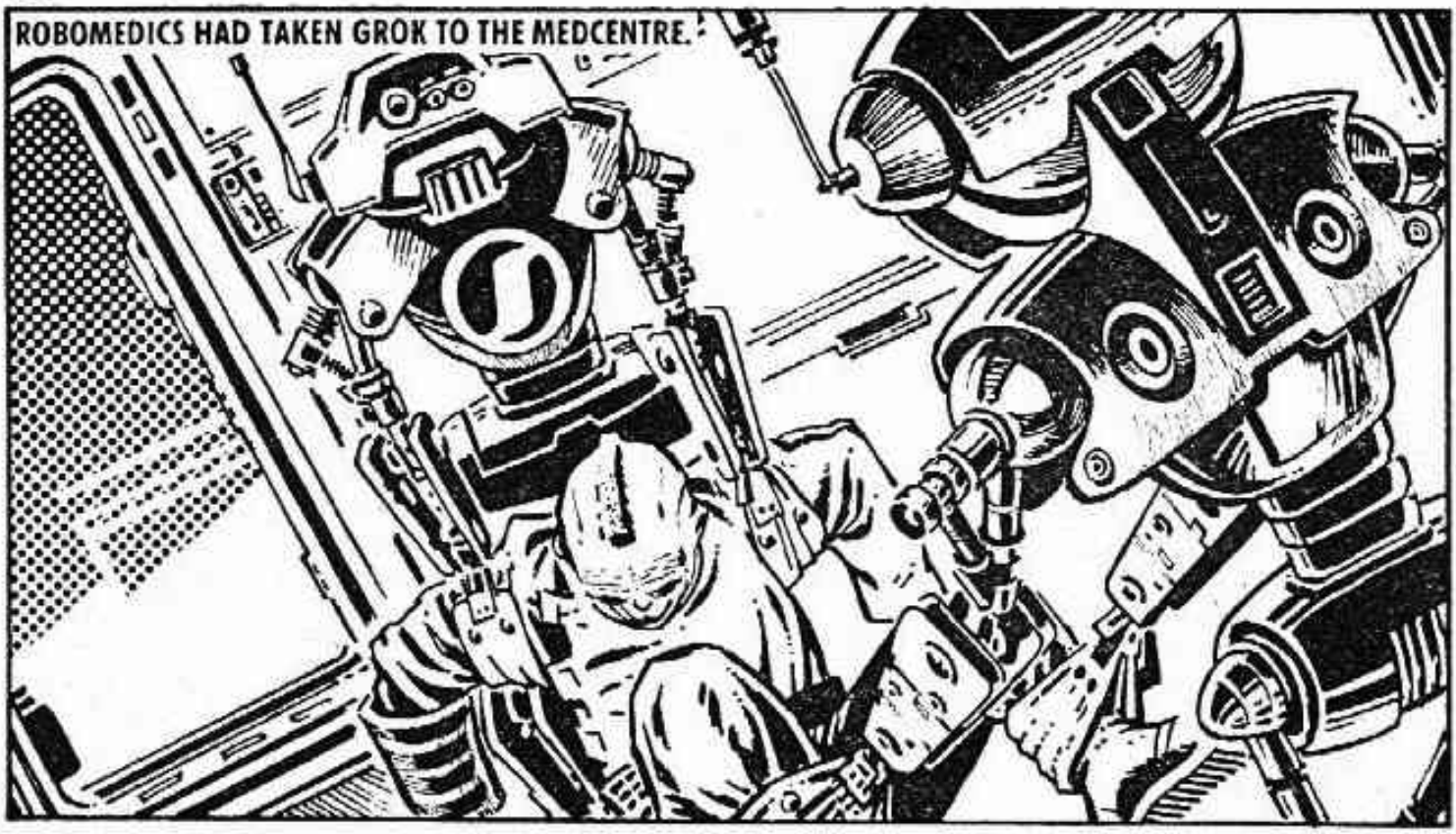
AN INDISTINCT VOICE WAS HEARD.
I KNOW THAT VOICE.

SLURGEL WELCOMES YOU, GROK. I HOPE YOU ENJOY THE GIFT I HAVE LEFT YOU.
GIFT?

SHIP — EMERGENCY! LIFT OFF! LIFT OFF!
SLURGEL'S GIFT WAS EXPLOSIVE . . .
WHAM!
CONTROL LOST. . . ALL SYSTEMS OUT. VESSEL IS IN CRASH SITUATION . . .

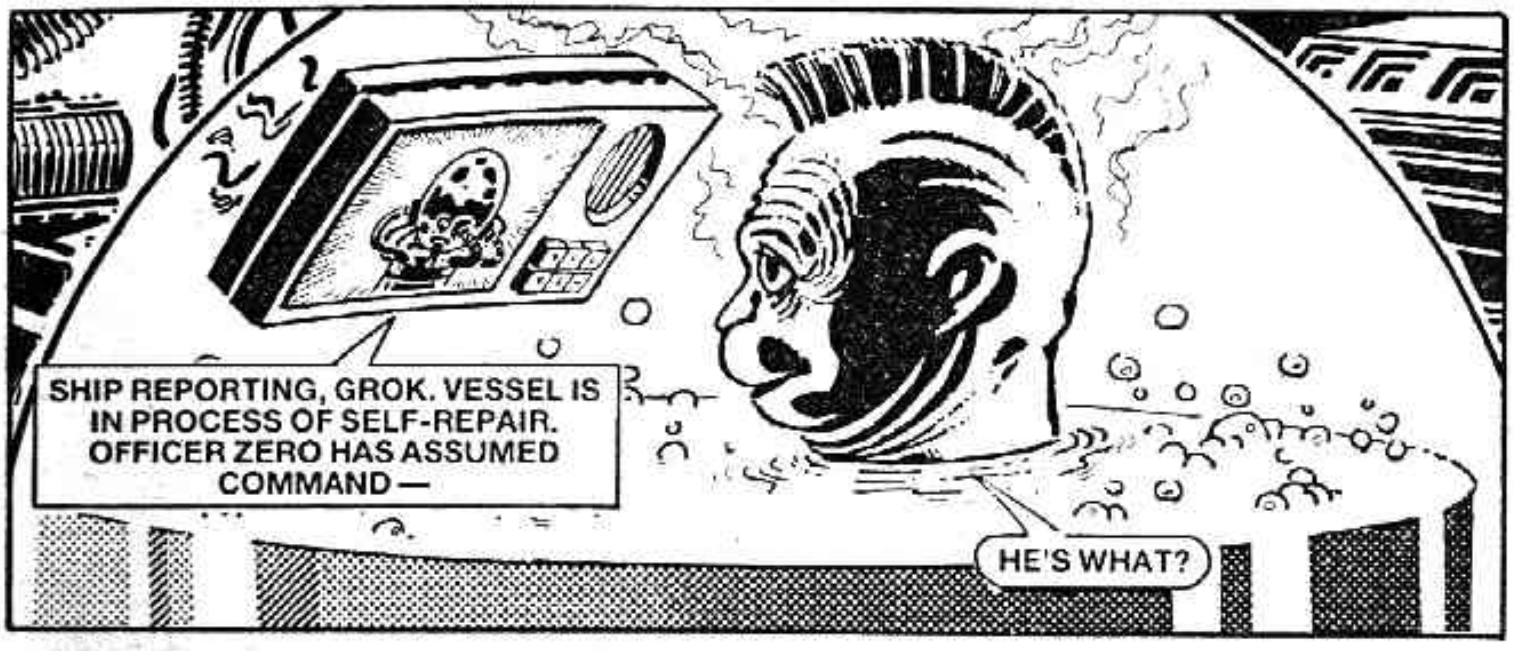

THE CRAFT CRASH LANDED.

LATER...
URRH — WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE IS GROK?
GROK HAS SUFFERED SEVERE DAMAGE. ROBOMEDICS ARE TAKING HIM FOR REPAIR.


ROBOMEDICS HAD TAKEN GROK TO THE MEDCENTRE.

SIZZLING SUPERNOVA! I AM IN COMMAND.
SHIP, BE SO GOOD AS TO REPORT ON OUR SITUATION.

GROK AWOKE IN THE REGENERATION TANK . . .
THIS IS YOUR SERVICING UNIT. NO DOUBT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN YOUR CONDITION. YOUR LEFT LEG HAS BEEN REPLACED IN ADDITION TO THE FOLLOWING LESSER ITEMS —
SPARE ME THE DETAIL. WHAT IS GOING ON? SHIP — REPORT!

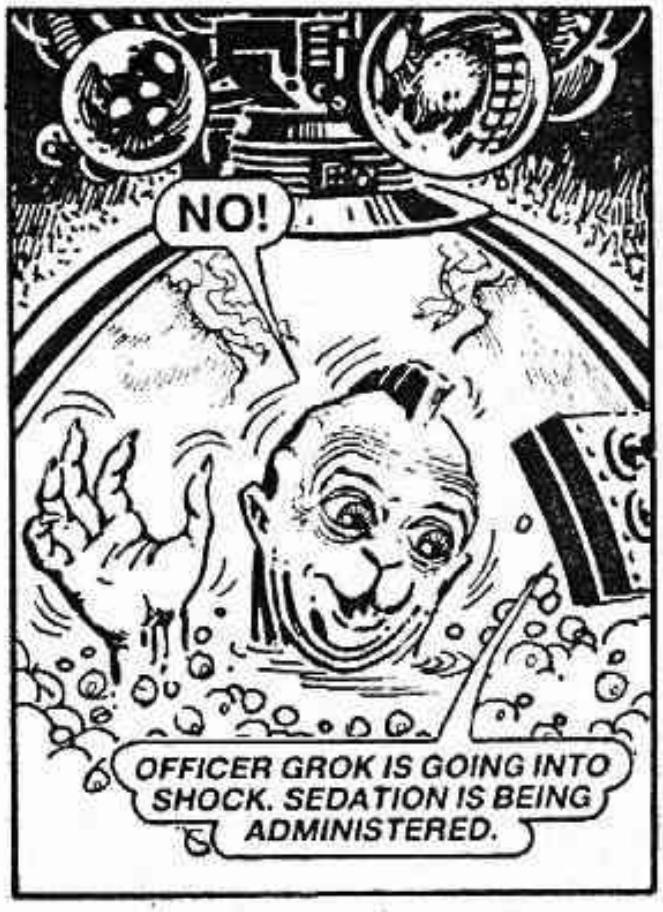

SHIP REPORTING, GROK. VESSEL IS IN PROCESS OF SELF-REPAIR. OFFICER ZERO HAS ASSUMED COMMAND —
HE'S WHAT?

I HAVE TAKEN OVER COMMAND, GROK — AS PER REGULATIONS. SO YOU JUST GET YOURSELF TOGETHER AND LEAVE EVERYTHING TO ME.
HUH — ER, WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY EVERYTHING?

WHAT ELSE BUT THE ARREST OF SLURGEL, OLD FELLOW? I PROPOSE SHUTTLING DOWN TO THE PLANET AND ROUNDING UP THAT ANNOYING REPTILE.
YOU WHAT?

YOU WILL OBSERVE I AM SUITABLY ATTIRED TO MINGLE AMONG THE PRIMITIVES — APPAREL DECIDED ON AFTER CAREFUL STUDY OF VARIOUS VIDEO RECORDS. I AM ALSO IMPLANTED WITH A TRANSLATION UNIT TO AVOID LANGUAGE PROBLEMS.

OH NO — NO . . .



ZERO SET OFF ON HIS MISSION . . .
SHUTTLE-NODE SPEAKING! WE ARE LIFTING OFF FOR SOL-THREE, GENERALLY KNOWN TO ITS INHABITANTS AS 'EARTH'.
SAVE THE WAFFLE, SHUTTLE. HAVE SHIP TRANSMIT ME SOME OF THAT PRIMITIVE VIDEO LIBRARY.

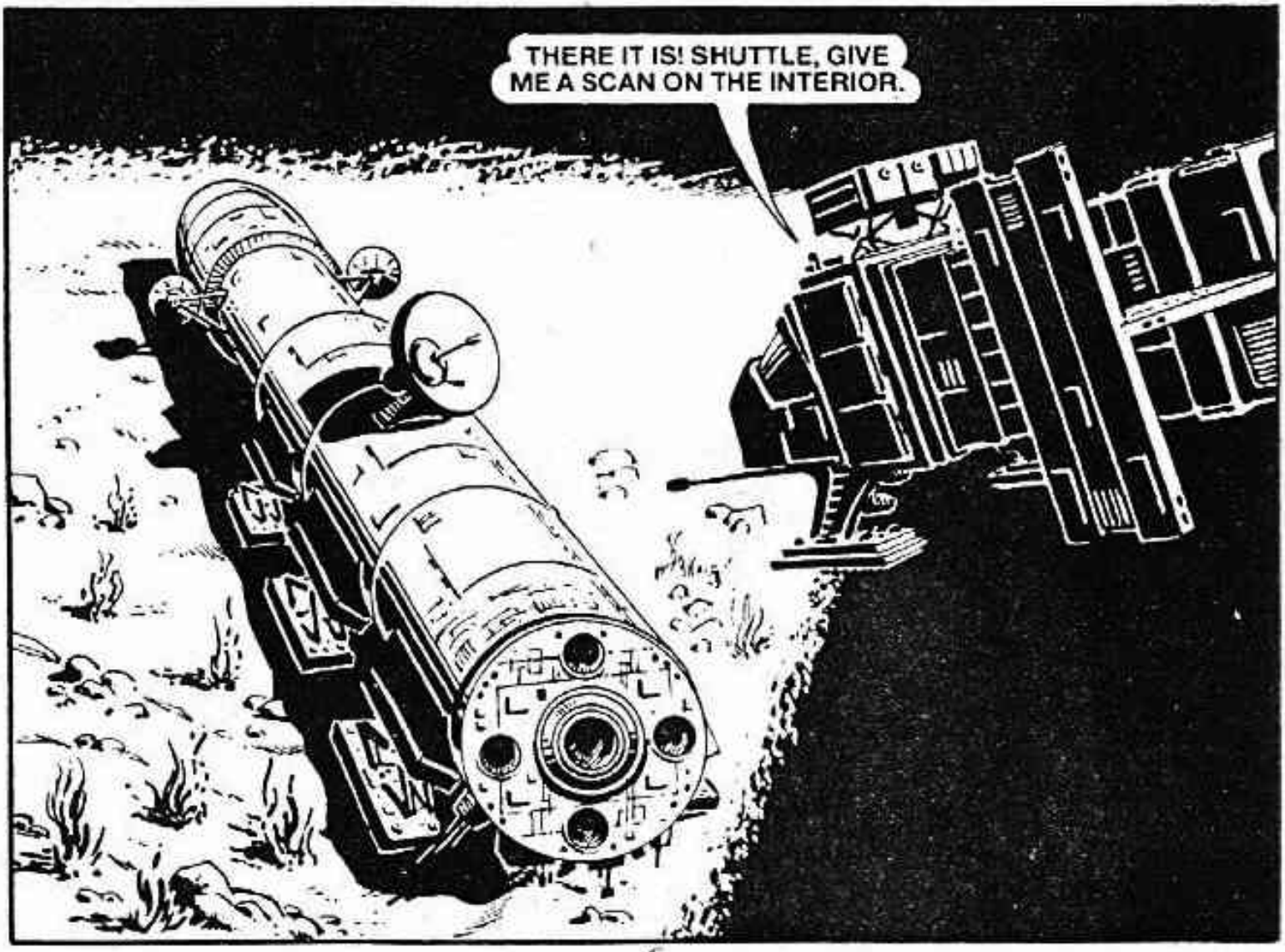
SUCH A CROWDED MASS OF LIFE.

WHY, THAT ONE CITYHIVE MUST HOLD MORE LIFE-FORMS THAN ON THE WHOLE OF MY HOME OF CAPELLA-FOUR.
WE ARE ENTERING THE ATMOSPHERE OF SOL-THREE. COOLING SHIELD IS ACTIVATED.

ION TRACE VANISHES OVER A LANDMASS OF THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE. SHUTTLE-NODE HAS BEEN SUPPLIED WITH BEARINGS.
THANK YOU, SHIP.

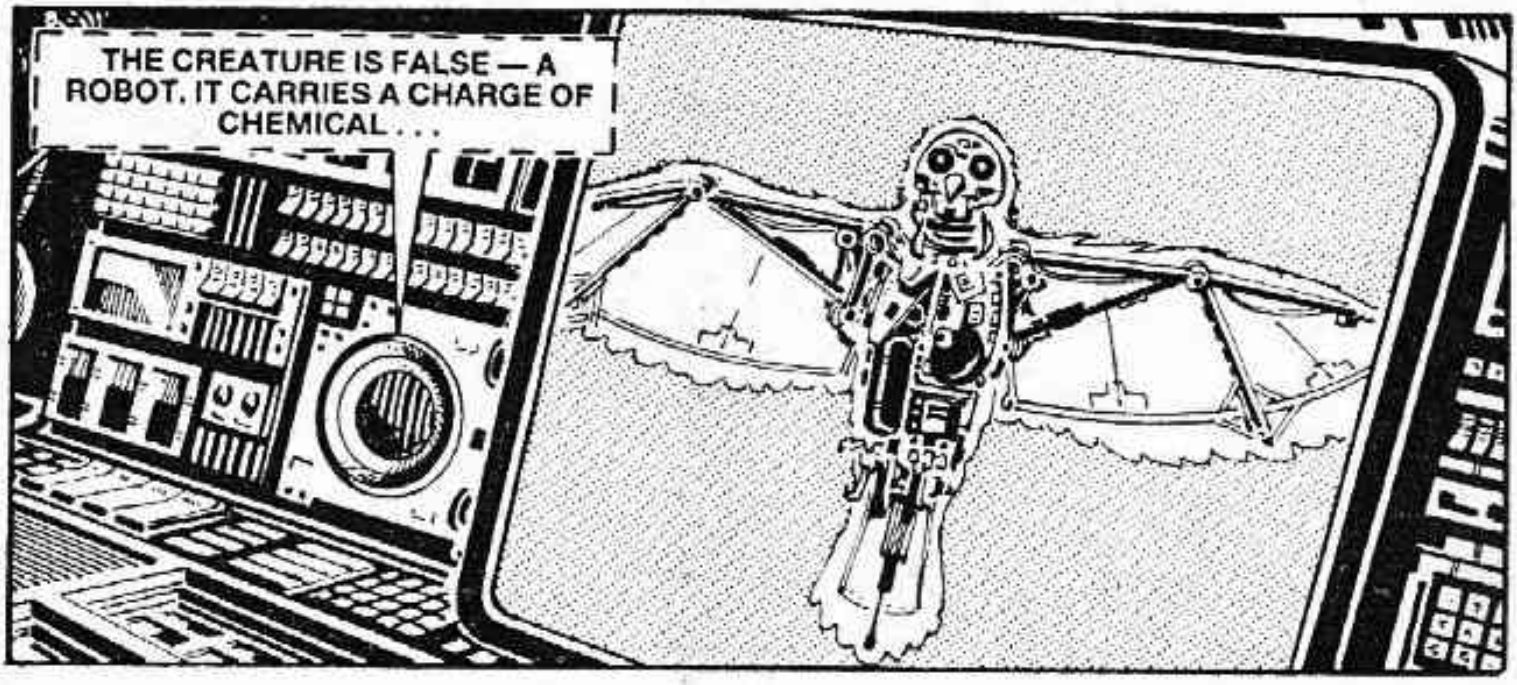
THE DESTINATION WAS ON THE NIGHT-SIDE OF THE PLANET . . .
TRACE TERMINATES OVER THIS BODY OF WATER.
A USEFUL HIDING PLACE, SHUTTLE. WE'LL GO UNDER AND LOOK.

ION TRACE STRONG? FUGITIVE VESSEL NOT VISIBLE DUE TO USE OF LIGHT-WAVE-CURVATURE.
CANCEL IT WITH OUR OWN BENDER, SHUTTLE.


THERE IT IS! SHUTTLE, GIVE ME A SCAN ON THE INTERIOR.

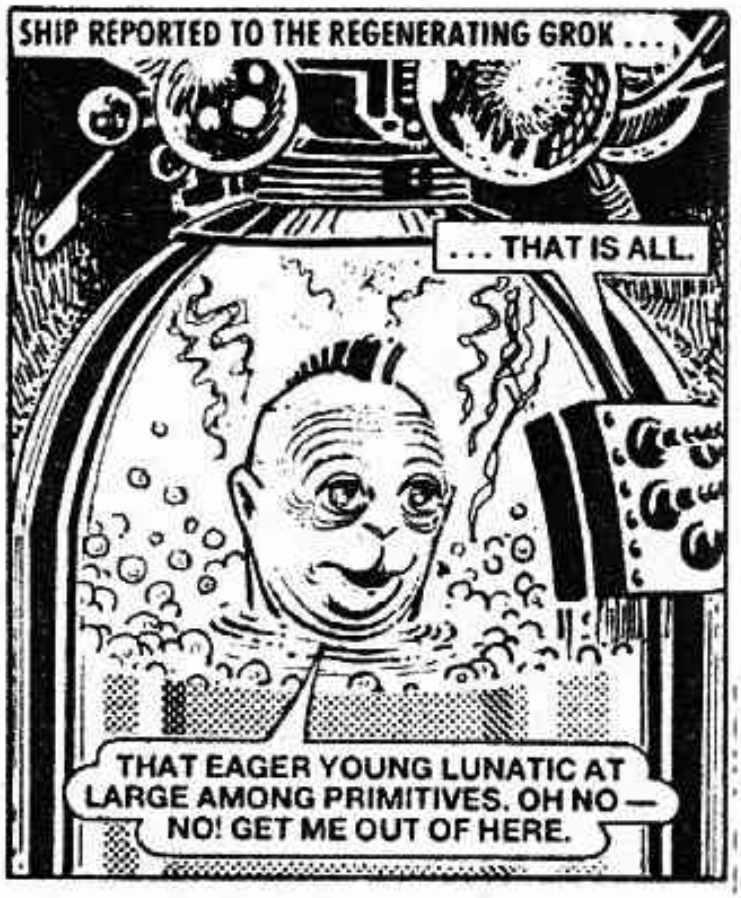
NO LIFE-FORM ABOARD. BOTH SHUTTLES STILL IN THEIR LAUNCH-CELLS.
SO HE MUST HAVE USED ANOTHER MEANS OF LANDING. TAKE US UP FOR A LOOK.
I DETECT PROGRESS OF A FORM OF LAND VEHICLE MOTIVATED BY A SMALL NUCLEAR-POWERED ENGINE.
SHUTTLE, KINDLY LAND AND PUT ME OFF.
NOW HIDE YOURSELF BESIDE THE FREIGHTER. I SHALL FOLLOW THE VEHICLE TRACE AND MAINTAIN CONTACT BY THE TRANSCEIVER IN THIS HEADCOVERING.
VERY WELL, ZERO.

I AM ABOUT TO DESCEND INTO THE WATER MASS. A FLYING CREATURE DISPLAYS INTEREST IN ME . . .


THE CREATURE IS FALSE — A ROBOT. IT CARRIES A CHARGE OF CHEMICAL . . .

. . . EXPLOSIVE!
BOOM!
TRANSCEIVER BROKEN — SHUTTLE DESTROYED! THAT WRETCHED REPTILE'S TRICKERY HAS STRANDED ME ON THIS PRIMITIVE PLANET.

YET I STILL HAVE MY ENERGY-SCAN TO GUIDE ME ALONG THE ROUTE OF SLURGEL'S VEHICLE.


SHIP REPORTED TO THE REGENERATING GROK . . .
. . . THAT IS ALL.
THAT EAGER YOUNG LUNATIC AT LARGE AMONG PRIMITIVES. OH NO — NO! GET ME OUT OF HERE.

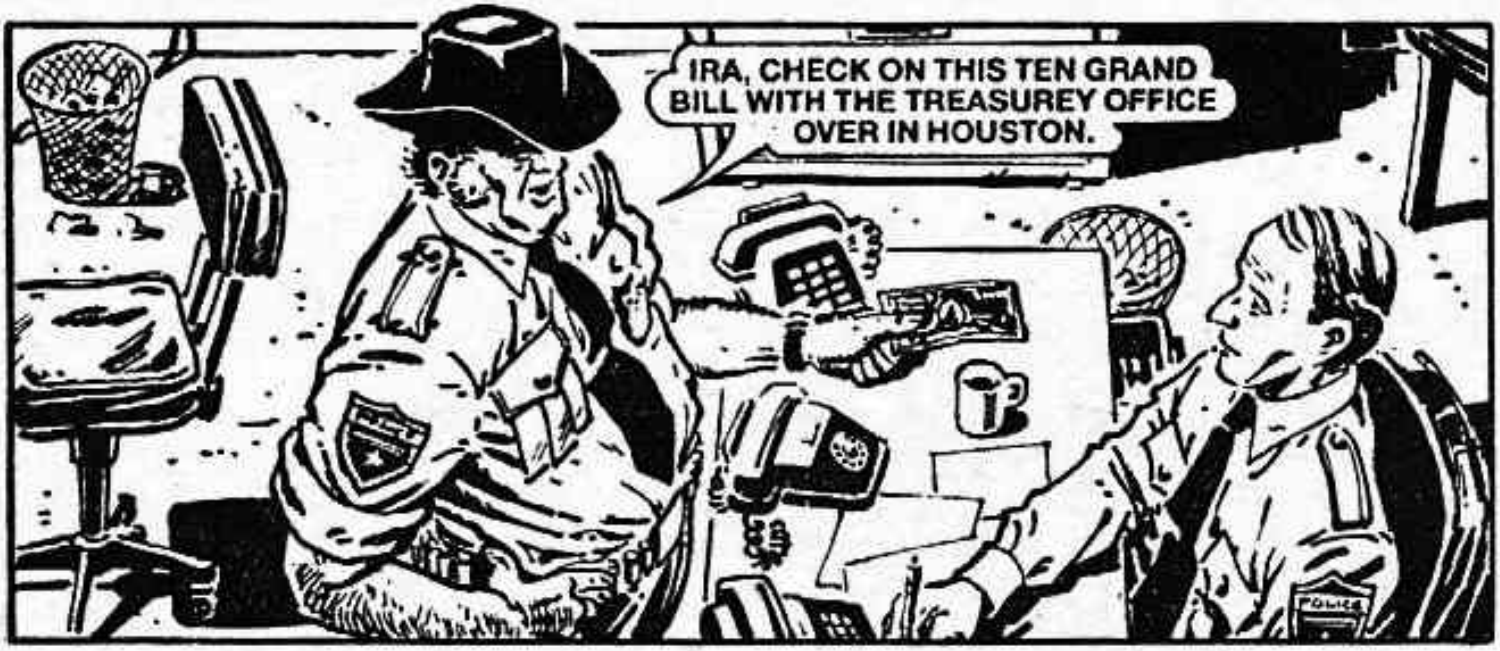
CARNIVAL DAY DAWNED AT THE TOWN OF BOGGY CREEK IN THE TEXAS BIG THICKET . . .
WELCOME TO BOGGY CREEK
HOTEL
FOLKS, THERE'S A BIG TREAT FOR Y'ALL THIS YEAR. TURKEY SHOOT, HOG HOLLERING, A HEAP OF SIDESHOWS AND THE GRAND FINALE — A GENUWINE BEAUTY CONTEST OPEN TO ANY MAIDEN AS AIN'T TOO HEAVILY BEARDED . . .
DAVE

SO ROLL UP, FOLKS! ROLL UP!
THAT PRIMITIVE'S CRIES HAVE EVEN MY TRANSLATION UNIT BAFFLED. MY ENERGY-SCAN SHOWS THE SLURGEL VEHICLE TO BE NEAR, BUT MY NEED AFTER SUCH A PERIOD OF WALKING IS NUTRITION.

EATS
OPEN
I MUST TAKE THE RISK OF BARBARIC NUTRIENTS. IT'S AS WELL I HAD SHIP DUPLICATE ME SOME OF THE MEANS OF EXCHANGE USED ON THIS PLANET.

TEN THOUSAND BUCKS! MISTER, I CAN'T BREAK THIS.
SUCH FLIMSY MATERIAL SHOULD BE EASY TO DAMAGE IF THAT IS YOUR CUSTOM. I AM CONTENT TO LEAVE YOU TO DO WITH IT AS YOU WILL.
COFF
SANDWICHS
HOT
SAT

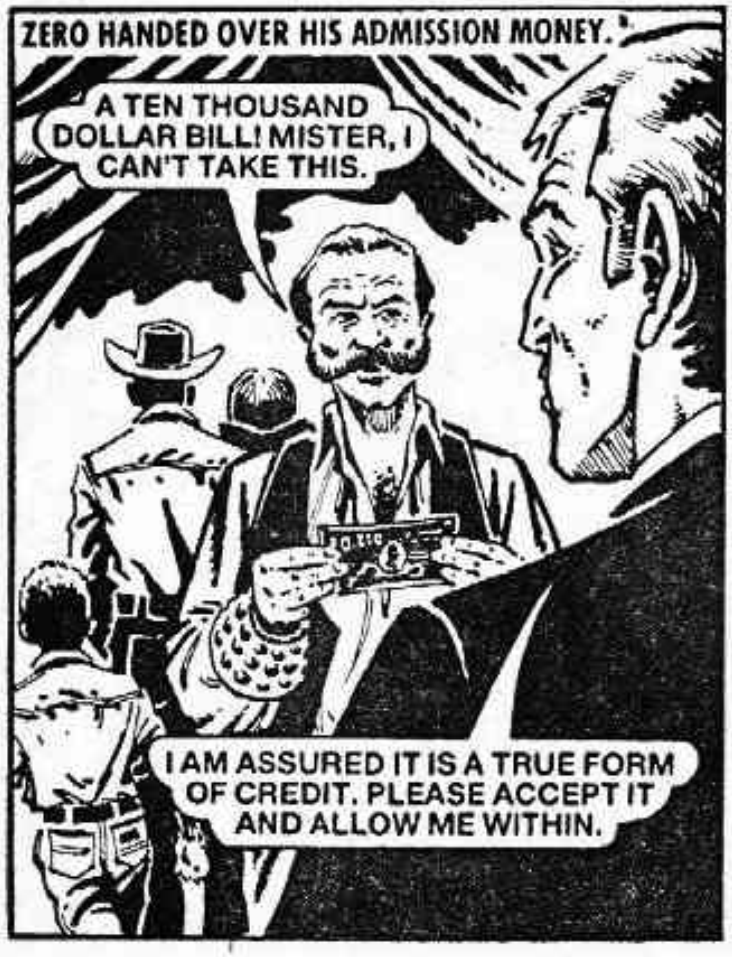
THE OWNER OF THE DINER WENT TO SHERIFF YANCY CLAPPER . . .
A TEN THOUSAND BILL FOR COFFEE AND BAGELS. THE PUNK WOULDN'T TAKE ANY CHANGE.
TRAFFIC PILE-UPS, PICKPOCKETTING, A MYSTERIOUS EXPLOSION UP AT THE BAYOU! ALL I NEED NOW IS SOME NUT PUSHING FUNNY MONEY.


IRA, CHECK ON THIS TEN GRAND BILL WITH THE TREASUREY OFFICE OVER IN HOUSTON.

REVIVED BY NUTRITION, ZERO RESUMED HIS MISSION . . .
MOST ODD! AT INTERVALS THE RADIATION CEASES TO BE FAINT AND INCREASES TO BURSTS OF CONSIDERABLE ENERGY.

SLURGEL! NOW WHY WOULD HE HAVE HIS LIKENESS SHOWN TO PRIMITIVES?

YES, FOLKS, THE LIZARDMAN OF BORNEO, ONLY ONE OF HIS KIND LEFT IN THE WHOLE WORLD. GO IN AND SEE HIM AND HIS SWAMP WORLD.


ZERO HANDED OVER HIS ADMISSION MONEY.
A TEN THOUSAND DOLLAR BILL! MISTER, I CAN'T TAKE THIS.
I AM ASSURED IT IS A TRUE FORM OF CREDIT. PLEASE ACCEPT IT AND ALLOW ME WITHIN.

SAM, TAKE OVER HERE WHILE I CHECK ON THIS NOTE WITH THE SHERIFF.

ZERO WALKED IN—
SWAMP WORLD
AW, SHUCKS, SLIM, HE LOOKS SO REAL.
JEST MAKE-UP, HONEY. HOW'S ABOUT WE GO AND LOOK AT THE SWAMP WORLD?
SWAMP WORLD
SAY, THIS LIGHT'S KINDA SPOOKY.
IT'S ALL DONE BY MIRRORS, HONEY.

THE FIGURES FLICKERED . . . AND WERE GONE . . .
A PORTAL — A MATTER TRANSPORTER. THAT EXPLAINS THE ENERGY BURSTS ON MY SCANNER.

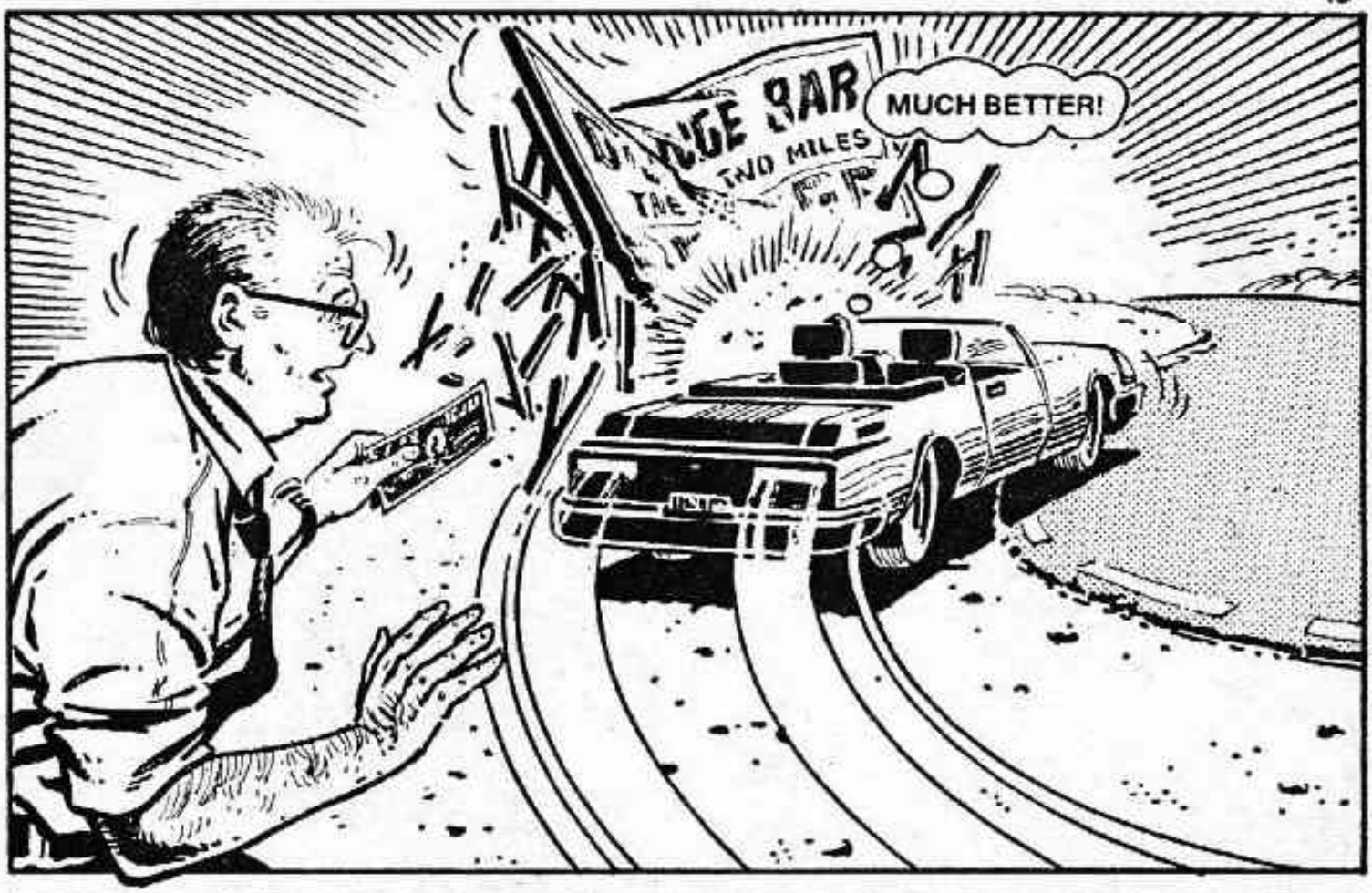
OBADIAH SLURGEL . . . I ARREST YOU! ANYTHING YOU SAY WILL BE . . .
SO THE LAW IS HERE. YOU COPS DO SEEM TO GET YOUNGER AND YOUNGER.

SLURGEL VANISHED . . .
MORE TRICKERY! A HOLOGRAM — A THREE-DIMENSIONAL IMAGE PRODUCED BY LASER.

KNOWING THE HOLOGRAM PROJECTOR COULDN'T BE FAR AWAY, ZERO LOOKED ABOUT—
LD
THERE HE GOES.

HE THINKS TO ESCAPE ME IN SOME CRUDE FORM OF LAND VEHICLE.

ZERO RENTED AN AUTOMOBILE . . . WITH YET ANOTHER 10,000 DOLLAR BILL.
THERE IS MORE IF THAT IS NOT SUFFICIENT.
HUH — ER — TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS WILL COVER IT, SIR, EXACTLY.
COMBUSTION ENGINE ACTIVATED — NOW TO APPLY THE RUDIMENTARY TRANSMISSION.
OFFICE
THIS IS NOT QUITE RIGHT.
THWUMP
ZOOM!


MUCH BETTER!
TWO MILES

SHERIFF CLAPPER HAD MORE ENQUIRIES . . .
THIS IS THE THIRD OF THESE BILLS I'VE HAD IN TODAY. THE TREASURY SAY THEY ARE GENUINE. A BILL OF THIS NUMBER HAS BEEN ISSUED.
THAT'S SURE A RELIEF.
POLICE
NOT

JEST ONE PROBLEM, SHERIFF. ALL THEM THREE BILLS HAS THAT SAME NUMBER.
WHAT?

LATER — TEN MILES OUTSIDE BOGGY CREEK . . .
SLURGEL AWAITS ME. THE VILLAIN REALISES HE CANNOT ESCAPE.
SO YOU HAVE DECIDED TO BE SENSIBLE.
EXTREMELY SENSIBLE, OFFICER. WHY ELSE WOULD I LURE YOU TO THIS QUIET PLACE AWAY FROM BARBRIANS . . .

. . . WHERE I MAY QUIETLY DEAL WITH YOU.
BY THE BLACK HOLE OF SHALTAL — THE VILLAIN HAS BROUGHT A MESON-BLASTER ONTO A PRIMITIVE PLANET. THAT'S ILLEGAL!

ZERO MOVED IN RAPIDLY — JUST IN TIME . . .
PERHAPS I WAS HASTY, OFFICER. COME OUT AND LET US TALK.
ZERO TOSSED A ROCK — AND SLURGEL SHOT . . .
SHOW YOURSELF! TRUST ME.
YEAH! ABOUT AS FAR AS I COULD THROW YOU.

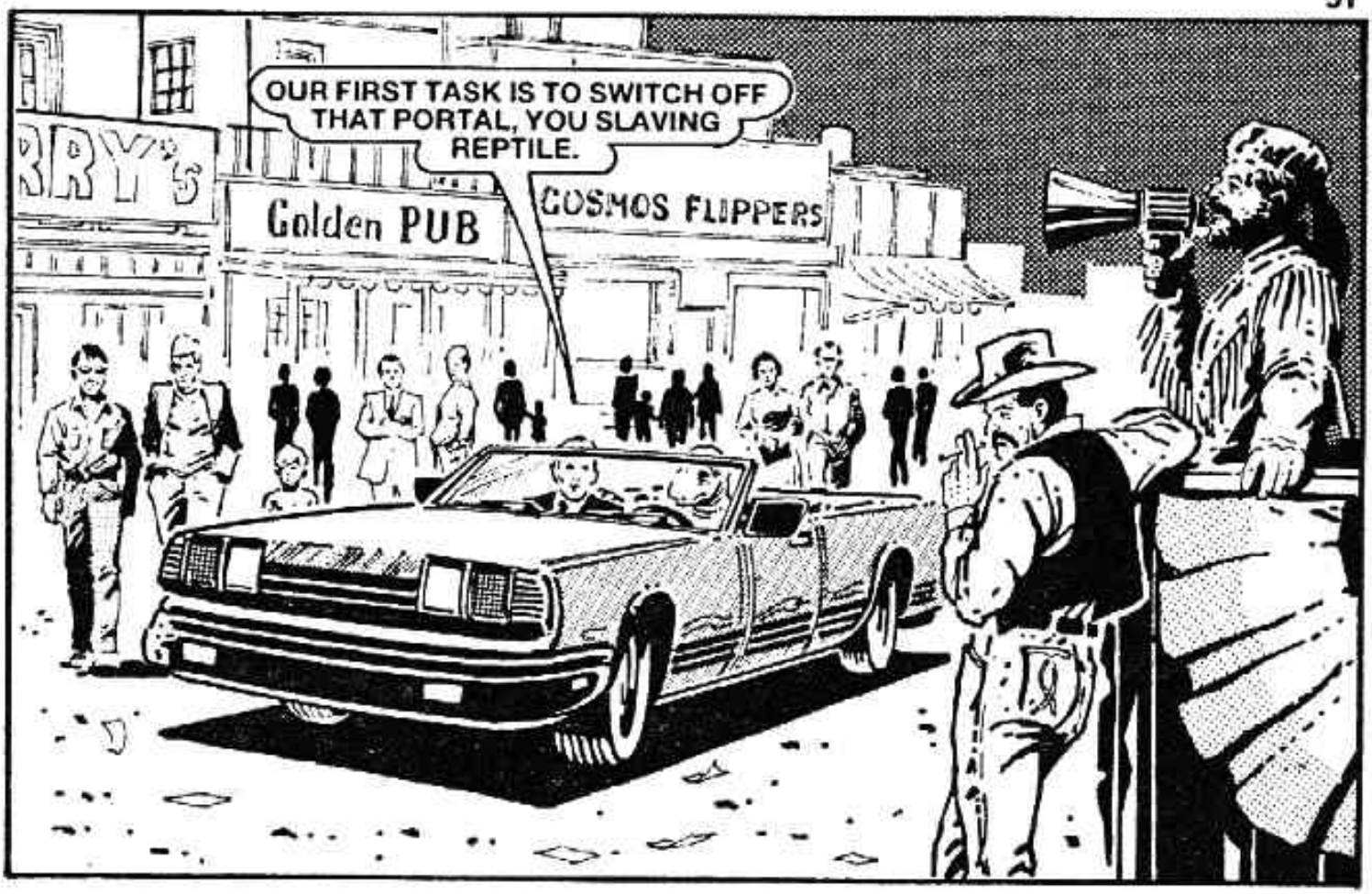
YOU FOOL! HEH! HEH!

GOTCHER, YOU OBNOXIOUS REPTILE.
EEEEEEEE!

DO NOT HURT ME — PLEASE. I HAVE AN AVERSION TO PAIN.
GET TO YOUR LAND-VEHICLE. WE ARE RETURNING TO THE HABITATION OF THE PRIMITIVES.

LAWMAN AND PRISONER DROVE BACK TO BOGGY CREEK . . .
WHAT KIND OF PLUNDER DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM THIS PLANET?
THE ONE PRODUCT IN WHICH IT IS ABUNDANT, OFFICER — LABOUR. THESE PRIMITIVES MAKE EXCELLENT WORKERS FOR CERTAIN CRUDE ENTERPRISES IN FRINGE AREAS OF THE GALAXY.

THIS IS TEXAS
WELCOME TO BOGGY CR
SO THE PORTAL IS USED TO CONVEY VICTIMS TO YOUR SHIP.
I LIKE TO THINK OF THEM AS MY PASSENGERS, OFFICER. I TAKE PRIDE IN THE KINDLY EFFICIENCY WITH WHICH THEY ARE PROCESSED, PACKAGED AND PUT INTO DEEP-FREEZE.

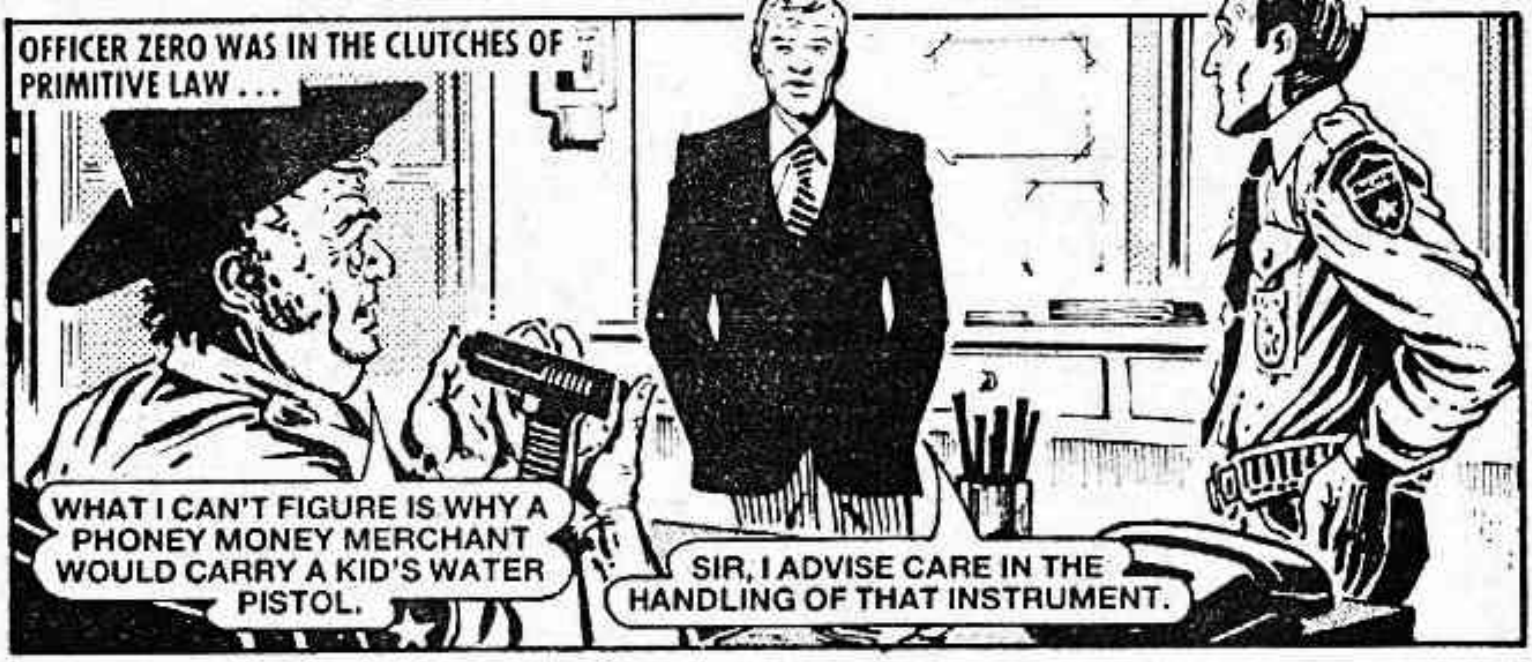

OUR FIRST TASK IS TO SWITCH OFF THAT PORTAL, YOU SLAVING REPTILE.
Golden PUB
COSMOS FLIPPERS

BUT BEFORE ZERO COULD DO ANYTHING—
DON'T GIVE ME NO TROUBLE, BUSTER. UP AGAINST THE AUTOMOBILE AND SPREAD THEM LEGS.
A CURIOUS REQUEST. NO DOUBT SOME PRIMITIVE CUSTOM.

NO HEAT ON HIM, SHERIFF. JUST THIS WATER PISTOL AND A LOAD OF 10,000 DOLLAR BILLS.
THAT'S THE EVIDENCE I NEED. MISTER, I AM TAKING YOU IN FOR PASSING BAD MONEY.

HE WAS TRYING TO PASS HIS FALSE MONEY ON ME.
DON'T YOU WORRY, MISTER LIZARDMAN. HE'LL BE TOOK GOOD CARE OF.

ROLL UP, GOOD PEOPLE. SEE THE ONE AND ONLY GENUWINE LIZARDMAN OF BORNEO. LOOK IN ON HIS SWAMP WORLD.


OFFICER ZERO WAS IN THE CLUTCHES OF PRIMITIVE LAW . . .
WHAT I CAN'T FIGURE IS WHY A PHONEY MONEY MERCHANT WOULD CARRY A KID'S WATER PISTOL.
SIR, I ADVISE CARE IN THE HANDLING OF THAT INSTRUMENT.

WELL, I DID WARN YOU.
HUH!
ZAP

I REALLY MUST INSIST THE INSTRUMENT BE RETURNED TO ME.
GREAT BALLS OF FIRE!
POLICE

I TRUST YOU WILL EXCUSE ME IF I NOW DEPART.
HUH — ER, SURE, WE AIN'T STOPPING YOU, SUH.

HE'S HEADING FOR THE CARNIVAL. IRA, TELEPHONE THE NATIONAL GUARD AND THEN BREAK OUT OUR HEAVY HARDWARE FROM THE ARMOURY.

SLURGEL WAS BACK IN BUSINESS . . .
HECK, IS THAT WHUT WE PAID FIVE BUCKS TO SEE? LET US GO LOOK IN THAT SWAMP WORLD.
WAMP

ZERO STARTED AGAIN —
AMP WOR
BACK SO SOON, OFFICER! TIME OFF FOR GOOD BEHAVIOUR, I SUPPOSE.
CUT THE CRACKS, REPTILE. WHERE ARE THE CONTROLS FOR THAT PORTAL?

SWAMP WORLD
THE TRANSPORTER IS BEAM-KEYED INTO MY SHIPBOARD SYSTEM. PROGRAMING CANNOT BE ALTERED AT THIS END.
SO WE GO TO YOUR SHIP.
HEY, YOU IN THERE! WE GOT YOU SURROUNDED. COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP.
I UNDERSTAND THE PROPER RESPONSE IS — 'COME IN AND GET ME, COPPER.'

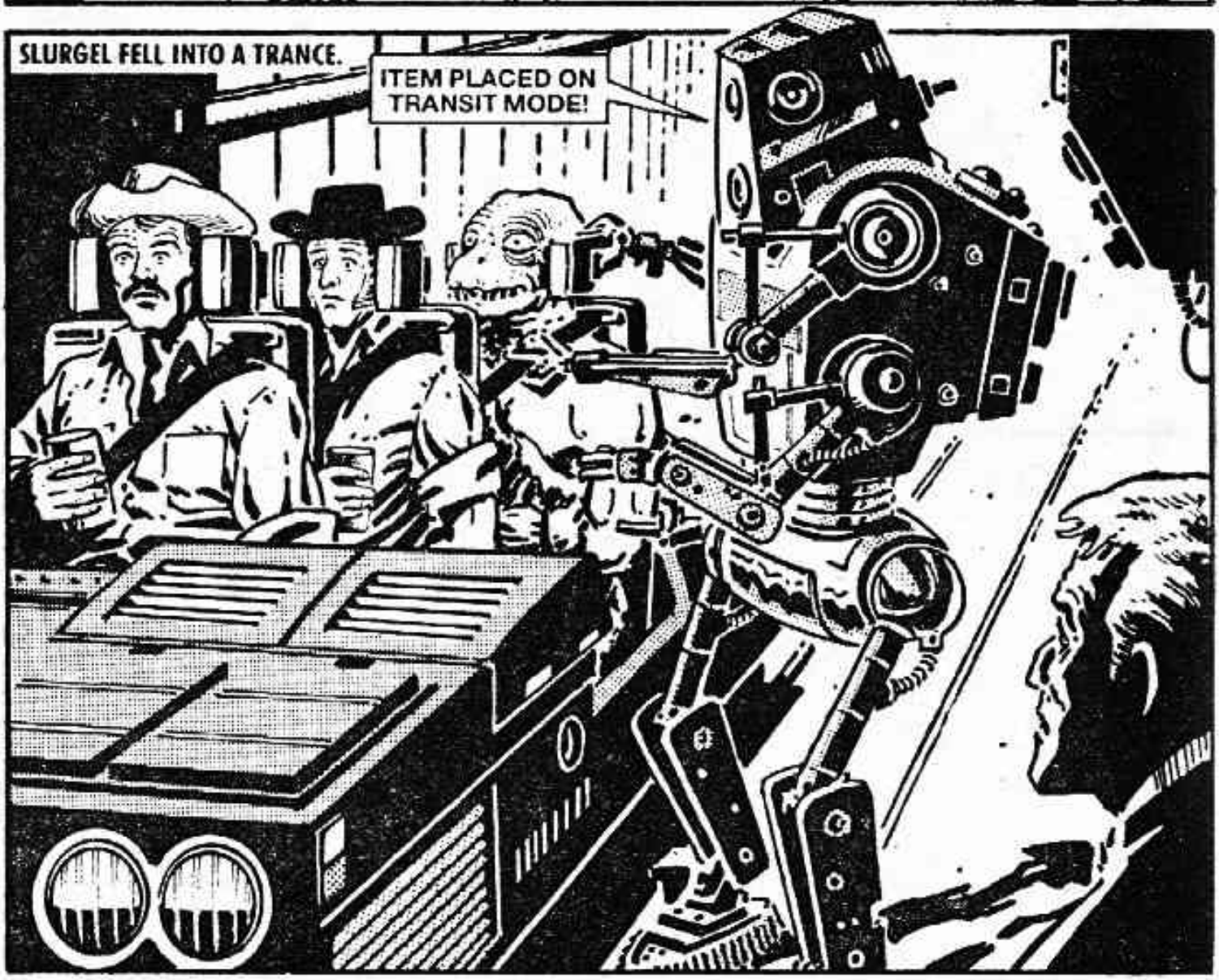
SHERIFF CLAPPER HAD RAISED A POSSE . . .
LOOKS LIKE HE AIN'T COMING OUT. IRA, WHAT DOES THE HANDBOOK SAY?
WE TRY TO START UP A DIALOGUE. THAT MEANS WE KEEP HIM TALKING TILL THE NATIONAL GUARD GETS HERE.
WHAT SAY WE TALK, BUD?
SURROUNDED BY PRIMITIVES — YET THERE IS A WAY OUT.
IN THE PORTAL . . .

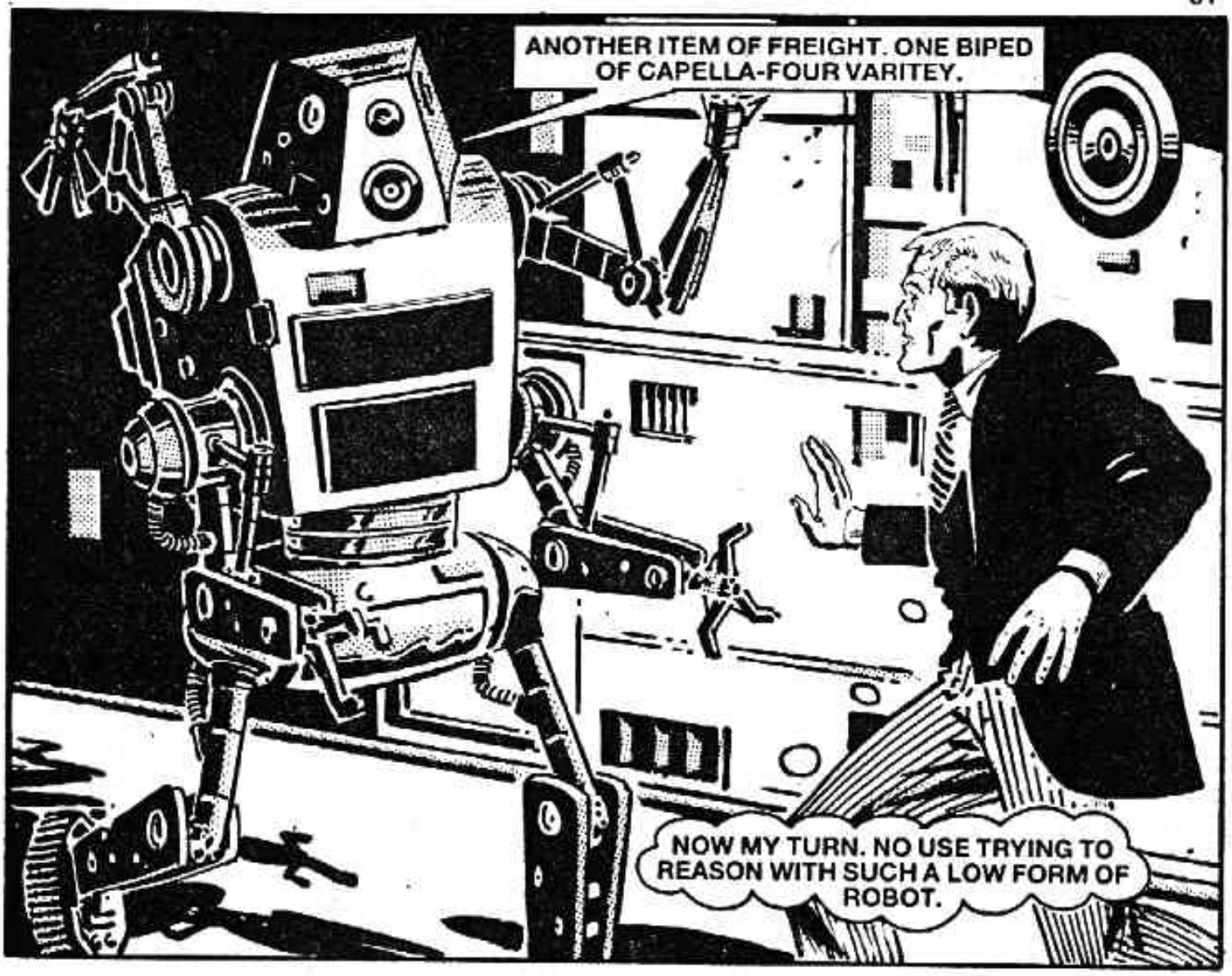
INSTANTLY, THEY WERE TRANSPORTED.
I ASSUME THIS IS THE HOLD OF YOUR RUST-BUCKET REPTILE.
A LOADING BAY — AND THE LAST PLACE YOU WILL EVER SEE, OFFICER.
THE MESON-BLASTER! YOU REMOVED IT FROM MY ATTIRE!
I HAVE THIS DESIRE TO STEAL THINGS, OFFICER. NOW I BID YOU FAREWELL.

BUT SLURGEL WAS INTERRUPTED . . .
RECORD ONE FURTHER ITEM OF FREIGHT. BIPED OF TEJAT-ONE REPTILIAN VARIETY.
HUH! MY CARGO-HANDLER!

RELEASE ME, YOU METALIC CLOD. I AM YOUR MASTER. I COMMAND THIS VESSEL.
SUCH DATA IS OF NO RELEVANCE TO MY ORDERS.

RECORD — NERVE NARCOTIC ADMINISTERED.
HURRRRRRRR.


SLURGEL FELL INTO A TRANCE.
ITEM PLACED ON TRANSIT MODE!


ANOTHER ITEM OF FREIGHT. ONE BIPED OF CAPELLA-FOUR VARITEY.
NOW MY TURN. NO USE TRYING TO REASON WITH SUCH A LOW FORM OF ROBOT.

THE MESON-BLASTER. SURGEL MUST HAVE DROPPED IT.

OFFICER ZERO MOVED WITH RAPIDITY . . .
KERLUNK . . . MALFUNCTION . . . CLAK-CLAK . . .
NOW TO RECOVER MY PRISONER AND MAKE MY WAY TO THE CONTROL CENTRE OF THIS RUST BUCKET.

ZERO PUSHED A TROLLEY UNTIL HE REACHED THE CRYOGENIC CENTRE.

BRRR — CHILLY. THIS MUST BE ONE OF THE FREEZER-HOLDS.

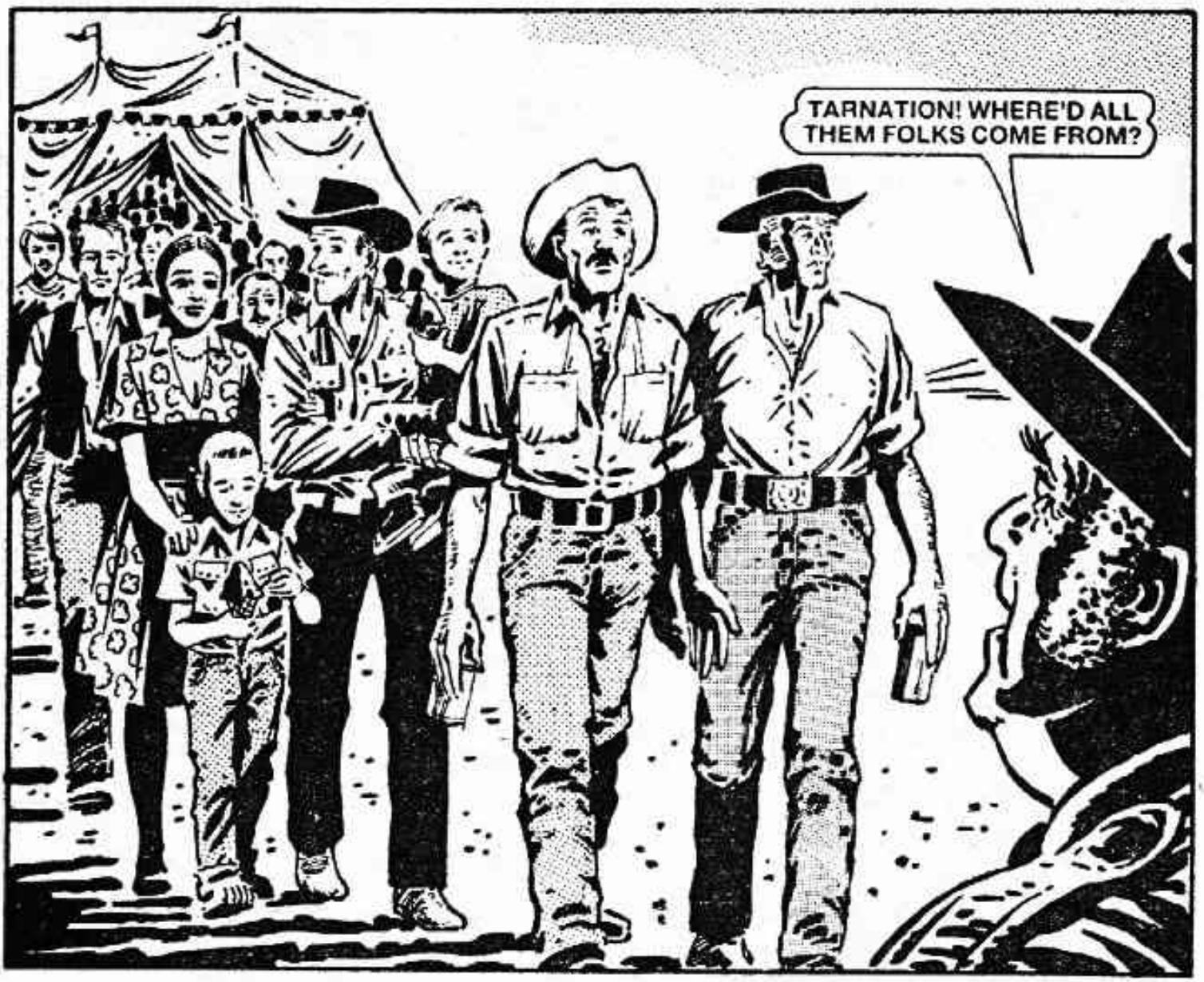
ZERO ACTIVATED A TRANSMITTER AND DISCOVERED GROK OUT OF THE REGENERATION TANK . . .

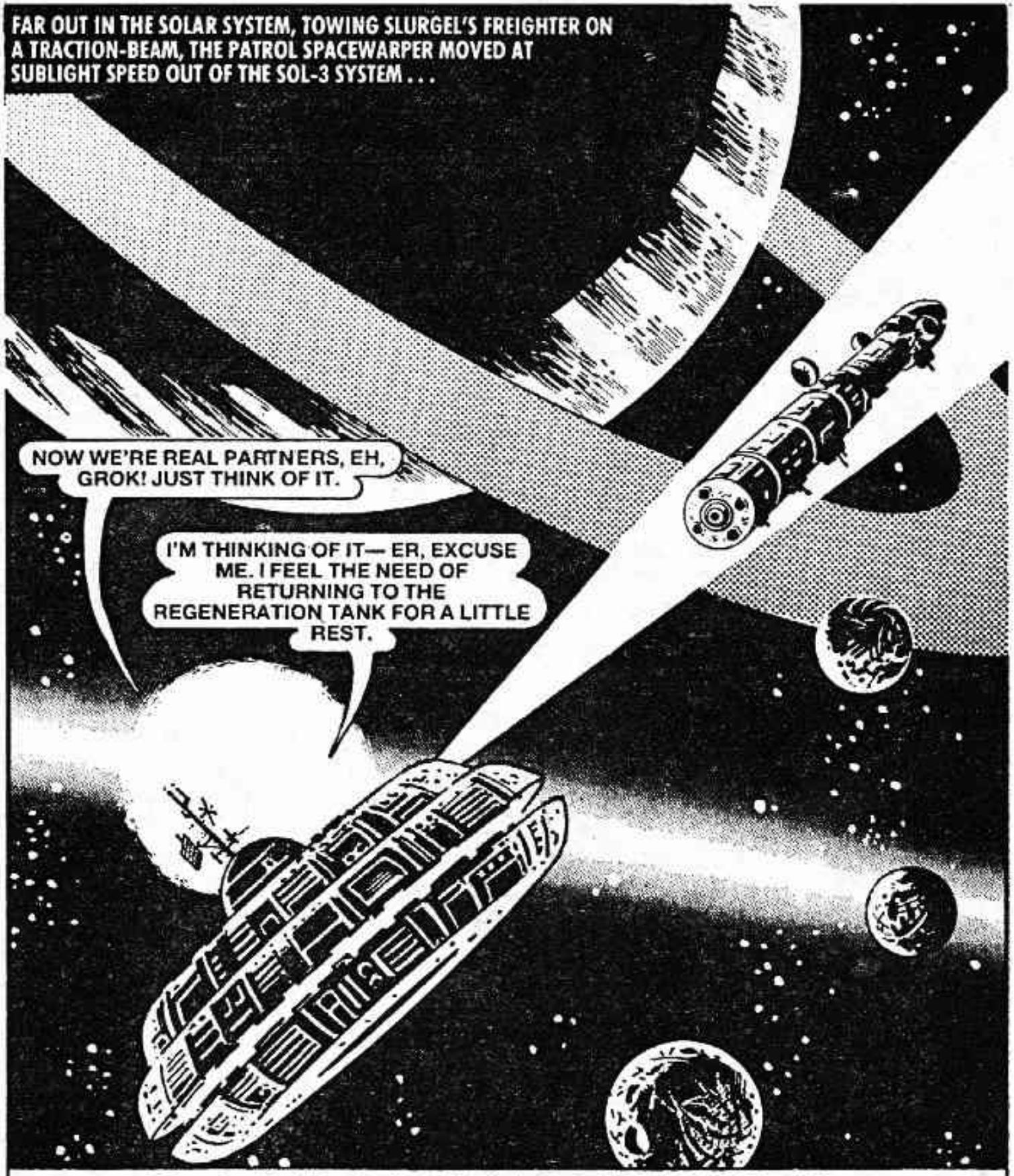
ZERO, YOU AMAZE ME. YOU ACTUALLY HAVE SLURGEL UNDER RESTRAINT.

I HAVE ALSO A SMALL PROBLEM. WHAT AM I TO DO WITH THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY SIX DEEP-FROZEN PRIMITIVES?

A SMALL PROBLEM, EH? SHIP, CAN YOU SUGGEST A SOLUTION?
REVERSAL OF THE MATTER TRANSPORTER COUPLED WITH USE OF A MEMORY CONDITIONING DRUG ON THE PRIMITIVES.
HELP HAD REACHED SHERIFF CLAPPER . . .
COLONEL, SO FAR HE AIN'T ANSWERED MY TRIES AT DIALOGUE, BUT THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD GET OUT OF THAT TENT.
THEN YOU MAY LEAVE THE SITUATION TO THE NATIONAL GUARD. MY BOYS ARE JEST RARING TO GO.

HEY, SHERIFF! SOMEBODY IS COMING OUTA THE SHOW TENT.
HOLD YOUR FIRE, MEN. GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO SURRENDER.
POLICE
TEXAS


TARNATION! WHERE'D ALL THEM FOLKS COME FROM?



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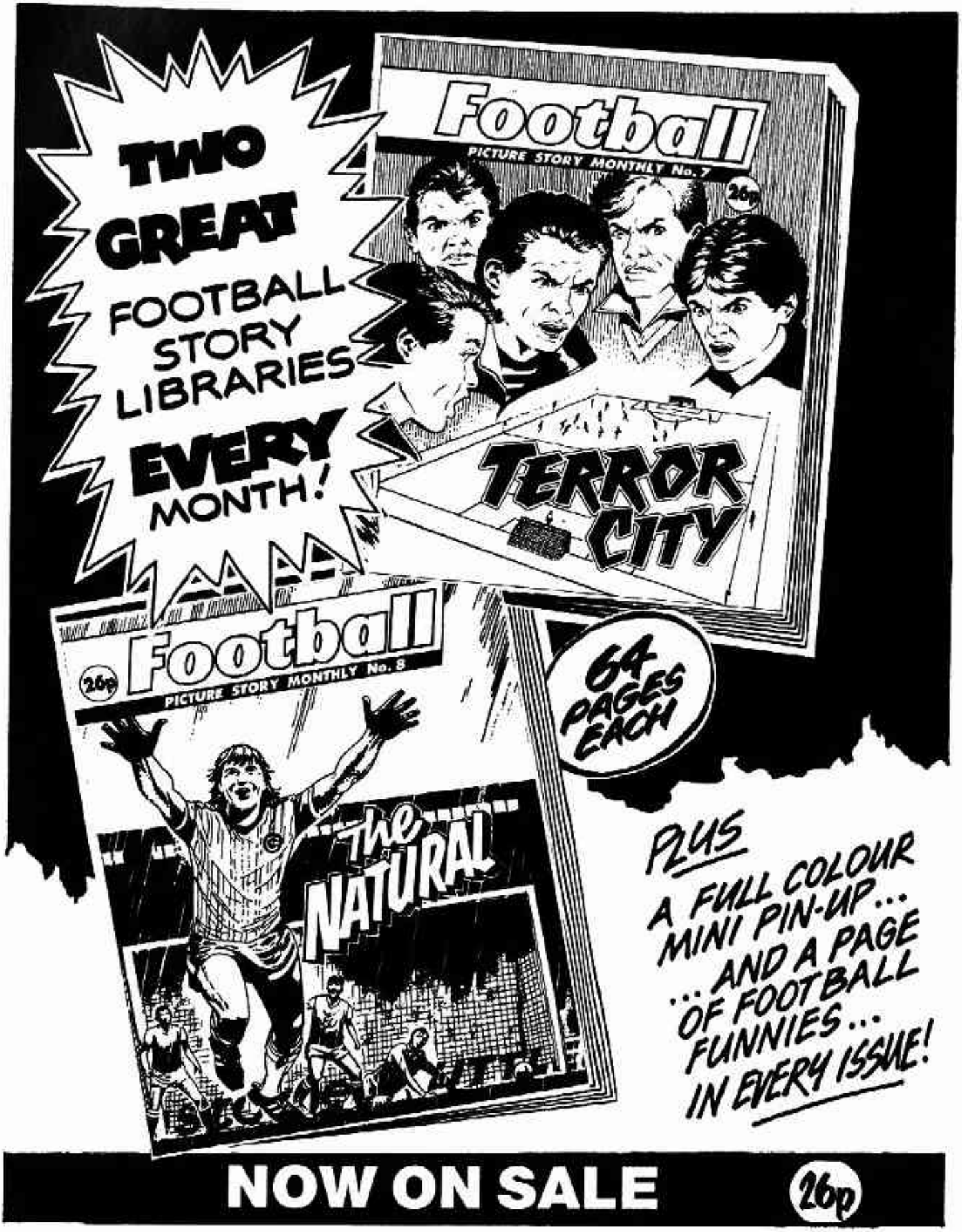
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Grok and Zero

Grok was a good cop! One of the best in the Federation. But he was less than happy when assigned a rookie partner. The rookie was a hume called Zero something or other, and Grok didn't like having rookies to worry about. Especially when Slurgel, the galactic crook and all-round bad guy was creating havoc on his patch. Grok had problems, but he wasn't quite sure if the biggest one was Slurgel or Zero.

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